





PROFIT AND LOSS.



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PROFIT AND LOSS:

A STORY OF THE

LIFE OF THE GENTEEL IRISH-AMERICAN,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF GODLESS EDUCATION.

BY THE

REV. DR. ^{Hugh}QUIGLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE CROSS AND SHAMROCK," "THE RUINED ABBEY,"

ETC., ETC.



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DEDICATION

*To the Right Reverend MICHAEL HEISS, D. D., Bishop
of La Crosse, Wisconsin.*

MOST REVEREND SIR

I ask your Grace's blessing on the following pages, which zeal for the proper education of our Catholic youth and their religious training have induced me to publish. I dedicate this book to your Grace to mark my admiration of your profound learning, your edifying piety, and your earnest efforts for the spread of true devotion and sound education among the people committed to your charge.

Besides, you are the poorest, as well as the most learned and zealous of our Bishops, and hence I can presume to claim your Grace as the patron of my humble literary effort, without leaving myself liable to the suspicion that, in placing my book under your patronage, I aspire to any other advantage than the honor I shall ever feel in calling you my Bishop, and in subscribing myself your Grace's obedient and humble servant in Christ.

H. QUIGLY.

October 10, 1872.

PREFACE.

THE following narrative, written for serial publication in a newspaper of St. Paul (Minn.)—“*The Northwestern Celt*”—a few months ago, is now given to the public in book form, in deference to the judgment of many persons of noted literary ability, lay and cleric, rather than from any opinion of the Author favorable to its merits.

The work, though written hastily and without much artistic design, was unquestionably very popular on its first appearance in the Northwest, perhaps because the scenes and characters delineated in its chapters were taken from occurrences of every-day life and objects familiar in the Western country.

The Author is well aware that there are many faults and defects of artistic skill and style in this book, but, if it should meet with as wide a circulation as “*The Cross and the Shamrock*,” “*The Prophet of the Ruined Abbey*,” and other anonymous publications of less note of the Author, he will feel satisfied, whether the critics are favorable or not, that the work has some merit, and will serve to promote the end he has in view in its publication.

There is one recommendation, however, which the Author can confidently claim for the present, as well as his former works, namely, that they can be read without any danger to religion or morality: the inculcation of Catholic *piety* and *faith*, and the guarding of youth against the dangers that beset their paths in the practice of the precepts of the Catholic Religion, being the end in view in the publication of this volume.

Another word the Author feels he can say without vanity is, that the style and manner of relating the facts of this narrative, as well as the facts themselves, are his own, and original; neither borrowed nor translated from foreign authors, but “racy of the soil,”—nor written under the glow of imagination caused by a perusal of “DICKENS,” or any of the other great delineators of modern manners and customs. “My errors, if any, are my own; I have no man’s proxy.”

THE AUTHOR.

LA CROSSE, WIS., *October 10, 1872.*



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PROFIT AND LOSS.

CHAPTER I.

A WINTER NIGHT'S CONVERSATION AROUND AN IRISH FARMER'S FIRESIDE.

MICHAEL MULROONY was an honest Irish farmer, a native of the County of Kildare, in the Province of Leinster, who could look back with decent pride to a long succession of forefathers, who belonged, as he said himself, to the "real old Irish stock," with not a drop of Saxon blood in their veins. Many a long winter's night he spent sitting by the cheerful turf fire that blazed on the kitchen hearth, relating to his children the brave exploits of their forefathers against the Sassenagh invaders, when some of them served, as men of war, under O'Neil, O'Rorke, or O'Moore, during the national struggles against the "Callagh roughe," or the "red hag," as Queen Bess was called; against Cromwell; "Dutch Billy,"

and every other invader from Strongbow's era down to the rebellion of '98!

The old man was proud while relating these patriotic deeds of his ancestors, but he felt a higher and nobler pride in his connection, by blood, with those of his relations who shone in the Church as bishops and priests, theologians and antiquarians. "Even now, my children, in our own days," he used to say, "although we are poor and humble, but honest, thank God, there is a priest, a cousin of mine, the greatest scholar and antiquarian, as Father Lynch told me last week, in all Rome, the Holy City, under the very eyes of the Pope himself, and this is a thing to be proud of, without any sin."

"But perhaps, father," interrupted Patrick, the youngest son, "that relation of ours in Rome does not know whether such people as we live, and what good can it do us to have him our relation or cousin?"

"Well, sure nothing but the honor of the thing, and I tell this to ye, my boys, to spur ye on to imitate him, or at least to do nothing to disgrace our noble relations, that's all!"

"Oyea, *Mavrone Mihil*," interposed Margaret, his wife, "I would not be putting proud notions in the heads of those boys: they will learn that without much teaching. May be that it is to earn their bread with hard labor they would be compelled to; and then it would be hard for them

to bear it, when they knew that so few of their forefathers were as low and poor as themselves."

"No Peggy," answered Michael, "never while I live will any of my blood, I hope, be so reduced. I am a farmer of two hundred acres, at low rent, and while that holds, and the Marquis of Waterford lives,—God spare him,—there is no fear but that I can support ye all, and give my boys good education too."

"God send that no accident may deprive us of this place, Mihil," replied his better half. "But see how the Connors and the Gradys, who were once better off than we, had to quit when that tyrant Wentworth became their landlord, instead of honest Captain Nolan. There is nothing certain in this world but death!"

"Yes, I know that the Connors and the Gradys and others had to leave for America. But who would compare the noble Marquis, who never turned out a family, with that black-hearted thief of a tyrant, Wentworth? His breed was always a bad one. What is he but a descendant of old 'Black Tom?' Some illegitimate spawn of that cursed old fire-eater, Lord Stafford, who almost depopulated Ireland, and filled it with tears, perjury and blood in his days."

"The Beresfords were not much better, and it is only of late that the stock is improving," rejoined his wife.

"I know that, Peggy; I know the Beresfords

were bad, and *bad* they would continue to be surely, but for Father Towhy—heaven be his bed to-night!”

“How is that, father?” inquired one of the boys. “How did Father Towhy cause the Beresfords to become less persecuting than they were in old times?”

“I’ll tell ye how it happened,” eagerly answered the father.

“One of the Beresfords, who was a great persecutor and priest-hunter, died, after having kept a priest, with his ears, nose and fingers cut off, in a sort of iron cage in his castle for over five years. At last he, the old heretic, died, and somehow or other the priest got his liberty. I believe the castle walls shook and rocked like a cradle after the old tyrant’s death till they had to let the priest go. After the priest got his liberty he came to the Catholic church next Sunday, as the people insisted on seeing him, though he could not say Mass from the loss of his fingers. But he told the people that, as his persecutor was now in the bad place, of course he could no longer hold him in durance. Well, the young lord, having heard that the priest said his father was in the lower regions, again sent a party of yeomen to seize on the priest and bring him to the castle. ‘Now,’ said he to the priest, ‘I am told you said the late Marquis was in hell.’ ‘Yes,’ said the priest, ‘I did; where else could he be? He was not fit for heaven, if for

nothing else but the vermin that covered his body and ate him up. (He died of the lousy malady.) He did not believe in Purgatory, he could not be there; therefore he must be in the bad place, for he died without repenting of his blasphemies against the Blessed Virgin and the saints, or doing restitution for the injuries he had done to the Church and her servants. He died in the blossom of his sins. See my hands. Did he restore my fingers he cruelly cut off, or my ears and nose?' said the priest with tears in his eyes, God be good to his soul.

" 'Well now,' said the young Marquis, 'I don't believe in your logic or theology either, and if you don't prove to me, so that I cannot doubt it, that my father, the late Marquis, is in hell, I will burn you over a slow fire, so I will, you cursed old priest you.'

" 'Well, if I do prove this to your satisfaction,' said the priest, 'what then?'

" 'If you prove what you say so boldly to be a fact, then I shall give you your liberty, do all I can to repair the injury done to you by the loss of your limbs, and place you on a pension while you live.'

" 'Well, will you promise that you will cease to persecute the Catholics, and inculcate on your children to be honest, merciful and good to the poor?'

" 'I will, so help me God,' said the Marquis, raising his hand to heaven.

“‘It’s a bargain,’ said the priest. ‘But, you must let me go back to the parish chapel to get the Mass-book and some vestments and holy water.’

“‘No, not a foot,’ said the Marquis; ‘out of this castle you will never go alive if you fail in twenty-four hours to prove your words.’

“‘Oh, give me three days,’ said the priest.

“‘Well, I will give you three days,’ replied the Lord Marquis.

“‘You will please,’ answered his Reverence, ‘let me have a messenger to go over to Father Meagher, the parish priest, for vestments and book and bell and other necessities for Mass?’

“‘Yes, you can have a messenger, or two of them if you need them,’ answered the Marquis.

“With that the messenger went, delivered a note to Father Meagher, and returned with the book, the vestments and all other necessities for offering the Holy Mass, with young Father Ryan, the curate, to wait on the maimed priest. For three days the priest fasted and prayed, offering Mass every day, by permission of the Bishop, assisted by the curate on account of his fingers, in his room in the castle. When the third day was come he sent for the Marquis, and told him that he would like to bring his proof forward in public, where many would be present to witness the event.

“‘Very well,’ spoke the Marquis, ‘I will summon

all my family in the dining-hall, the largest apartment in the castle, and there I want you to adduce your evidence that my father is in Hell, or by all that's'—

“ ‘Oh, don't curse, if you please,’ said the priest ‘I have fasted and prayed these three days, and now I don't like to hear any cursing, as it may provoke the Lord to punish instead of having mercy on your family.’

“ When all were assembled in the dining-hall, the poor priest, more like a ghost than a man, with his stumps of fingers offered the Holy Mass, and then after he was through, he turned round and read and read for an hour or so till all were getting impatient, when, at last, the dead Marquis, like Hamlet's ghost, rose up through the marble floor, visible to all present. All made at once for the doors, but they were locked by the orders of the priest and Marquis, and, more dead than alive, the crowd had to remain where they were till the priest put these questions to the horrid spectre that appeared before all their eyes:

“ ‘Who are you?’

“ ‘I am the Marquis of Waterford that late was, alas! alas!’ answered the ghost.

“ ‘Where is your dwelling-place since you died? Tell me truly, in the name of Christ.’

“ ‘I'm in Hell! in Hell! in Hell!’ groaned the spectre.

“ ‘Now,’ said the priest, addressing the son,

father of the present Marquis, 'are you satisfied that this is your late father, and that he speaks the truth?'

" 'I am now satisfied. For God's sake dismiss him; oh, oh I die!' he groaned, fainting away.

" 'Begone, in Christ's name!' said the priest, and the horrid vision vanished like a flash of lightning through the roof of the castle.

" From that day to this there was never a persecuting Beresford; and they have been all good landlords ever since the great miracle of Father Darby Twohy. God be good to his soul!"

" Well, well," exclaimed the children, "that was really a wonderful occurrence, if true, as you state it."

" True, ay? That's as true as the sun shines. Didn't I know Father Darby Twohy well, having gone, the year of the first great cholera, to see him to get his blessing and his prayers against the cholera? The whole world knows that he brought up old Beresford from the infernal regions, and ever since, thanks be to God, who gave such power to man, that noble family are among the best in all Ireland to the poor."

" Indeed, you speak the truth in that, anyhow, Mihil," said Margaret, his wife. " My father, God rest him, Denis Cauny, who lived within half a mile of Father Darby's house, till he died, heard this account as often as he had 'fingers and toes,' from the priest's own lips, and often saw his stumps

of fingers, though he generally wore gloves on them."

The account of this prodigy seemed to make a deep impression on the minds of all the children except the youngest boy, Patrick, who appeared to hear the account of the change in the conduct of the Beresfords with a smile of incredulity, and remarked that he should like to hear an account of that extraordinary story from somebody who was present when the old lord was called up.

"I'm sure I was not present. I was not born when what I have told you happened," answered the old man. "But I spoke to men who were present, and who became Roman Catholics immediately after, though they were Protestants and Englishmen all their days before; one of them was old Mr. Hubbard, the post-master of our town, and the other, Mr. Perry, the jail-keeper. But one thing we all know, that the Beresfords, from being cruel tyrants, became suddenly good men. See the present Marquis, how liberal he is. A short time ago he went to Dublin, with a bag of gold, and flung it by the handfuls to the beggars who asked him for alms. Often he returns back the whole 'gale of rent' to a poor farmer, as he lately did to the Shinnors family, when he learns that their crops failed. We are under him now, and may God spare him long life and good health; for our religion teaches us to pray for all men, heretics

and infidels, though they may injure or persecute us. Now, as it is getting late, let us kneel down and say our prayers, not forgetting our good landlord, the noble Marquis of Waterford."





CHAPTER II.

DO NOT COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE
THEM ?

THE day following the fireside conversation related briefly in the foregoing chapter, Michael Mulroony might be seen riding home at a rapid trot on his Cunnemara saddle pony, from the town of Kildare, where he had been intending to pay his half-yearly rent to the agent of the Marquis of Waterford. It was in the early spring, the 25th of March, "Ladye Day," a time in Ireland when the trees are green and orchards and fruit-trees beginning to be glorious under their profusion of sweet-scenting blossoms. But the blossoms had no smell nor had the rich melody of the birds issuing from the groves any music in the ears of poor Michael Mulroony, for sorrow was in his heart, and grief blunted his senses to all invitations of nature to gladness and joy. In fact, he knew that the prospects of his family were blighted, and that his anticipations of comfort and independence for himself and them were

as uncertain as the changes of the fickle weather, for the Marquis of Waterford was dead. The noble lord, who was passionately fond of the chase, had been returning to his lodge after an exciting day's hunt of the fox on the plains of Kildare, accompanied by the nobility of that and the neighboring counties, when, crossing over a narrow open drain, his horse slipped and fell with its master to the earth. The animal got up immediately, but the noble rider, having dislocated his spine, near the articulation of the head and neck, was instantly killed. Horror filled the minds of all present, when they saw him who led the chase, who ever claimed the trophy of victory in the close-contested race, whose courage no dangers could damp and no obstacles retard, after all his prowess, daring and success, cut off as it were and struck down by an unseen hand in the most unaccountable manner, his horse having stumbled upon a mere unevenness of the meadow over which it quietly paced!

Medical aid was at hand, and applied immediately, for there were several eminent surgeons in the company of sporting gentlemen present, but medical science could not raise the dead, for the Marquis *was* dead.

The body was conveyed to the castle, the sad news spread as fast as electricity could send it to all parts of the United Kingdom, and there was conventional mourning in many of the lordly man-

sions of the great and rich. The harp, the piano and guitar were silent in the halls of the great, while consternation, anxiety and real grief filled the humble abodes of most of the poor dependents of the aristocratic house of Beresford. There were indeed but very few of that notoriously cruel family, which preyed on the vitals of a large district in Ireland ever since the "Reformation," who, by ordinary humanity, not to speak of justice, deserved well of the peasantry, for the Beresfords were the worst representatives of the cruel Established Church in Ireland; and hence the deceased lord, though a man of a rakish and wild nature, but not void of principles of equity and generosity, was really loved by the good-natured peasantry of the south and east of Ireland. The young lord, now no more, had performed some queer tricks that shocked their notions of modesty and dignity, but they made allowances for his youth and English education, hoping that in the course of time he would become—"God bless him and give him long life"—the best of landlords. Hence, on the Marquis coming to his majority, and on the occasion of his marriage, the peasantry on many of the hills of Waterford and Tipperary and the level plains of Leinster kindled "bonfires" and spared neither turf nor straw to give the young Marquis a real Irish welcome home to his estates. Many a sympathetic tear was shed in the humble cottages of the peasantry, and many a prayer was

offered to God to have mercy on the good-hearted lord, for they knew, though, most likely, he died as he lived, outside the saving portals of the Church, yet they could not tell what mercy may have overtaken his lordship at the moment of his fall, within sight of the now desolated cell of St. Bridget of Kildare.

The Irish peasantry, though exact Catholics, are by no means bigoted, as people call it, and when they hear of any person's sudden death, cross themselves devoutly and, no matter what his religion was, pray and hope for God's infinite mercy on his behalf, saying, in their own old quaint and charitable fashion, according to an old legendary rhyme :

"From the saddle to the ground,
Mercy asked and mercy found."

When Michael returned home on that ill-omened day to him that witnessed his landlord's death, he was covered all over with perspiration and bespattered with the mud of the roads, raised by the nimble hoofs of his pony. He dismounted in haste, rushed into the house without speaking his usual "God bless all here," or "God save ye all," and threw himself, jaded and muddy as he was, into the old rustic arm-chair that stood in the chimney-corner near the fire. His heavy sighs alone attracted the notice of his wife, who was spinning fine linen yarn in the little recess behind "the dresser," in the end of the large kitchen.

"What on earth is the matter?" she said, running up to where he sat. "Is it hurt you are, Michael dear, or did you get a stroke, or is it to fall off the horse you did?"

"Ah, woman, let me alone," he answered sulkily. "No, I am not hurt or sick, thank God, but something worse has happened to us that will reduce us all to beggary, that's what it will."

"Oh, God forbid! but, even if it does make us poor, whatever it is that has happened, welcome be the will of God. Surely many better people than we came to poverty, glory be to God. But why are you so dark? Why don't you let us know at once? Did the agent refuse the rent, or give you notice to quit, or what's the matter with you at all, at all? Tell me, agra," she said, caressing him.

"You near guessed it then," he said; "we are to be turned out of here sure, and it will break my heart to leave this place where I labored so long and made so many improvements in vain. The master is dead! Peggy," he exclaimed.

"What?" she inquiringly asked, "not the noble Marquis surely that got married nearly a year ago—not he, I hope, eh?"

"Yes, Peggy, he is dead—dead as a herring; he fell off his horse yesterday at the Curragh Spring fox-hunt—confound the hunts and hounds. All the tenants are in an uproar, for there is no heir now; but his estates will fall into his tyrant uncle's

hands, who is a bishop, and the very worst of the Beresfords now living, by all accounts."

"Well, dear, that can't be helped. 'What can't be cured must be endured.' Sure the world is wide and the Lord in heaven is good, glory be to His blessed name to-day," she said, bursting into tears, which she tried hard to conceal from Michael. He no sooner saw his wife, whom he tenderly loved, in tears, than he in turn assumed the office of a consoler, and affecting a right manly tone, said: "Come, Peggy dear, it's a sin, you know, to grieve for temporal things, while we have our lives and health, thank God. Get me my supper, and don't let the children see us grieving in this manner. It would break their hearts, poor things."

"Oh dear," sobbed the wife, "something forewarned me that we must leave here soon. Indeed I dreamed so often that I had to cross the great sea; and this was why I spoke to you the other night, when you were boasting to the boys of the education you could give them out of this place. I told you we were sure of nothing but death. And now my worst fears are coming to pass, God help me, and His holy mother to-night."

"Shut up, now, my dear," said he, kissing her tenderly. "I don't like to see those pretty eyes shedding tears, Peggy ashore. I am not discouraged yet. The world is wide, and America, thank God, is free and open for us all, where there are no landlords, but plenty of land for all the world.

Hurrah for the 'Land of the brave and the home of the free.' Now, Peggy, not one drop more of a tear. See, the boys are coming from school; we must not let them see our weakness, a gra gall machree."

The boys no sooner entered the house, having come from the Christian Brothers' school, than to the question of their father, if they had heard any news, Michael, the oldest of the male children, answered, "Yes sir, the Marquis of Waterford was killed yesterday on the curragh, having fallen off his horse, as the Brother Superior told the class this evening."

"That's bad news for us all, boys," replied the father, "but it may be all for the best for us; for now we will go to America. Won't you be glad to pay a visit, perhaps, to your cousins, the Casey boys?"

"I, for one," answered James, the second son, "am not sorry to leave this country, where the poor are ground to the earth by landlords and tyrants. I often wished for a chance to go to America."

"And I, too," said Patrick, "for I want to see those great lakes and prairies we read of in the geography."

Hugh and Michael were not so sanguine of the advantages of being obliged to exchange the almost perpetual spring of green Erin for the parching suns and withering blasts of North America, while Mary, Bridget and little Annie shrunk from

the idea of having to cross the mighty Atlantic Ocean in a boat, and said "whoever wanted to go to America that they should not, but would stay at home with their mother, or with their Aunt Mary, if their mother would have to go."

"Sure you would not go off all the way so many thousands of miles, mother, over sea and land, in danger of being drowned?" said Mary.

"I don't know, dear," replied her mother. "What if we have to leave here?—then I should go somewhere to get a new home."

"Who would put us out of here?" inquired Bridget. "Is not the Lord Marquis dead; how then can he disturb us?"

"It is not he that could or would do it, but those who will come into his place. His uncle, the bishop, will now be lord of the soil, and he is said to be a hard man."

"I thought that bishops were good men. Does not the Catechism say that they are the successors of the Apostles, and were chosen by Christ to do good?" remarked Bridget.

"Yes, dear," said her mother, "but there are other bishops than those appointed by Christ. There are bishops appointed by law and the English government, who have no care of the people or the poor, but to take their money and oppress them. This new landlord is one of this sort of bishops, having no power but what they get from the Queen or King, and not caring for the souls, but only seeking to get the money of the people."

“Oh, I don’t like such bishops!”

“Nor do I, Bid,” interrupted her father. “And this is why we are all going to sail for America in a month’s time, where there are no bishops or other tyrants that can rob the poor and oppress their tenants. In two months from now, please God, we will be all, I hope, safe and sound in America. But we must keep this a secret, for fear any attempts would be made to stop us. When I heard the Marquis was dead I did not go near the agent at all with my half-year’s rent, but brought it back as a small help to make up for my many hundreds of pounds in this farm spent on buildings, drainage, fencing and other improvements for which the law does not allow me one farthing.”

Michael Mulroony was a man of determination and decision of character, as well as of some penetration and judgment in temporal affairs. Hence his conjectures regarding the wholesale eviction of his tenantry by their coming ecclesiastical landlord were correctly formed. He was the first, therefore, to move out from his holding long before the advance of the “crow-bar brigade” which was brought to dispossess others of the tenants under the late Marquis. And in less than two months after the death of the Marquis he had all his stock and effects turned into money, and he and his family were on board an ocean steamer—“the America”—bound for New York. After having quit their native shores in tears, eleven days suf-

ficed to land them under the bright skies of the New World amid strange scenes and a strange but kind people, amid the din, bustle and exuberant life of one of the grandest cities in the world—that of New York.

But though the great city of New York was very attractive to the younger members of Mr. Mulroony's family, it had no attractions for himself, for he was determined to follow the same occupation in the new world that he did in the old, namely, that of a farmer. His children, especially the oldest of them, were made very flattering offers of employment in the city and its vicinity, through the influence of some of the many acquaintances which they met immediately after their arrival. And the oldest boy, Michael, and his sister Mary, concluded to remain in the city, after having obtained, not without some difficulty, their parents' consent, while the rest of the family, after a few days' rest, started again on the long but rapid journey of the Far West, as the State of Wisconsin was then called, where, having found employment for a time as overseer of a number of men on the construction of a railroad, he had a good opportunity to become acquainted with the quality of the land and also to select a suitable location for a permanent home. He continued in his situation of railroad-master for three or four years in the neighborhood of Milwaukee, from a desire that his children should have the advantages of schooling

in the Convents of some Sisters and Christian Brothers which were within a couple of miles of his station. At length, sighing for his old occupation, he resigned his position as road-master, and after having received passes from the railroad officials, whom he had so faithfully served, travelled a good way southward and westward, and finally purchased a farm of 320 acres of land in the State of Minnesota, in the valley and almost on the bank of that fairest of American rivers, the smooth-flowing and majestic St. Croix.

"I am now, Peggy, thank God, an estated man," he enthusiastically said to his wife on his return after two months' travel in search of a good location. "I have bought 320 acres of land, at second hand, in Minnesota, near an Irish settlement. Before this day month we'll all be in our new home, please God, with no landlord but God over us."

"God send it," answered his wife, drawing the *dudeen*, or cutty pipe, from her mouth. "I am not sorry to quit this noisy railroad business. I was always afraid of accidents, which happen from time to time on those railroads. How far is the church from the place you bought?"

"Indeed, Margaret, not very far; about two miles. You can go to Mass every Sunday and holiday, and even on week-days if you like. There is a nice little priest, a Tipperary man, who welcomed me very warmly to his parish. Thanks be to God, I

could never be happy far from church. I would rather live on a meal a day than be deprived of the opportunity of going to church."

It was in this manner that Mr. Mulroony gave an account to his family of his late purchase. And in three weeks' time another new and substantial member was added to the Irish settlement on the banks of the St. Croix, in the State of Minnesota.





CHAPTER III.

“HE WHO DESPISES SMALL THINGS SHALL FALL BY LITTLE
AND LITTLE.”

HONEST Michael Mulroony, having secured in Minnesota an estate nearly as large as the one of which his ancestors were robbed in Ireland by the iniquitous laws of England, felt very vain and independent. His imagination was naturally of a lively and fanciful turn, and the bracing air and superb scenery in the vicinity of his home seemed to add tenfold to its vigorous capacity. Hence in purchasing his farm he had an eye for the beautiful as well as the useful. He could have purchased a farm much cheaper, and perhaps more productive than his present homestead for less money than he paid for it, in a backward or ordinary locality, but he wanted a strictly handsome place. Indeed he wanted a place that would bear some likeness, in imagination at least, to the old estate on the banks of the Blackwater in Ireland called “Cappa,” out of which his forefathers were expelled by the ruthless hands of confiscation

and war. The hills, the groves, the lake, as the St. Croix is called, and the rivulet or creek, all carried his mind back to the memories of the past on the banks of the "Avon Duv." "*Falsi Simoentis ad undam.*"

His judgment and imagination were in perfect accord, for the farm which he purchased from a tall Swede corresponded exactly with his ideal of what a farm ought to be. The land was two-thirds prairie, a deep rich dark soil, the balance timbered with heavy oak and maple, but the trees—smooth, graceful and thinly set in the land so as to appear like an immense "English park," as such is called.

There was a small living creek or rivulet full of speckled trout running through the farm and dividing it into unequal parts, and this little stream was almost entirely shaded by an evergreen arbor of pines and bushy cedars on both its banks. A rampart of low hills defended this charming spot on the west and northwest from the violence of the severe winter blasts, while on the south and east, with only a few acres of rough land intervening, stretched as far as the eye could reach the majestic St. Croix with its silver waters in undisturbed slumber, save when agitated by the paddles of side-wheel steamers and propellers, the oars of raftsmen or the fluttering of countless myriads of aquatic birds—ducks, geese and long-necked cranes. The man felt proud, and indeed had apparent good reason to be proud, of his home. Hence he

often called his wife's attention to the beauties of the surrounding scenes—the majesty of the St. Croix, which he said “seemed to him to rest in such profound peace; the richness of the soil, which was equal to the ‘Golden Vale’ in Ireland; the luxuriance of the foliage in its various changes, green in the summer, purple and red in the autumn and brown in the winter. Then there is the game, for killing which a man would be transported or imprisoned in Ireland; also prairie chickens and partridges, and wild ducks and geese, and deer and bears, not to speak of the smaller animals. Why if the people in Ireland only knew how well off they could be here, there would not be many left there, if they had the means to come, before a year.”

“I doubt very much if many would come if they could help it,” answered the wife. “See how long the winters are—nearly seven months out of the twelve in the year. Then what short springs, and how hurried a man must be in harvest to secure his crop, which three days’ unfair weather may ruin.”

“That’s true enough, but though the winters are long, they are healthy. And another advantage is that we are not called upon to support an established church, or to pay the Protestant parson for condemning our souls to perdition. Then again our children get free schools, and we can hire our own teacher.”

“That’s true, we have plenty of schools, such as they are. But I guess we have to pay dear for

them in school-taxes. Now we have only two going to school since Hugh, poor lad, joined the Christian Brothers, and you have to pay \$30 a year school-tax, a good deal more than the schooling they get is worth, I am thinking."

"Talking of schooling, my dear woman," he said, "I have made up my mind to send Pat to the academy at Brighton this season. I allowed the other boys to have too much of their own way; but this young fellow I am determined to have a gentleman made of anyhow."

"What 'cademy do you mean?—that Yankee school where they are mixed up, male and female, black and white and yellow; where Suppie Hoskey got his learning, eh?"

"Yes, that's the very place I am going to send him. Be sure and have his shirts and collars nice and fashionably done up, for some of the 'biggest bugs' of the country have their sons and daughters there."

"Indeed you shan't, Michael," answered his wife. "Sorra a foot will he go to that same school. Can't he get schoolin' enough down at the 'Irish Corners,' where the parish priest visits the schools every day and sees that the scholars learn their catechism?"

"But there are some 'complishments which he could not get at the 'Irish Corners,' which I want him to acquire at the academy."

"Yes, there is, to be sure. He would learn to chew and smoke tobacco and spit it in our faces;

learn, may be, to call you 'the old fellow,' his father, as young Cronin did, who was lately sent to State's prison for beating his mother, and other tricks that I need not mention. God gave you sense, Michael; it is you that has the queer notions about making your son 'a gentleman.' "

The "Irish Corners" was a settlement exclusively Irish, where, besides a large church, there were also several flourishing schools, taught by men of their own race and religion. Some of these schools were within a shorter distance from Mulroony's farm than Brighton, and conducted by abler teachers than the self-styled "Professors" of the academy. But poor Michael Mulroony would have his own way. He began of late to dabble in politics, was unanimously elected a justice of the peace for the district, and was frequently appointed chairman at public meetings, read almost continually journals and newspapers which treated of politics and recommended the most radical measures. His earlier religious training was soon obliterated, and his sound common sense gradually undermined by the plausible sophistries of such journals as the *Leveller's Press*, *The Irish Republic*, the *International Guide*, *The Day's Doings*, *The Sun*, *New York Times*, *Harper's Weekly*, etc. He soon became a frequenter of taverns, and, though he seldom or never indulged in intoxicating liquors, being a Father Matthew temperance man, he spent a great deal of his time and considerable

money while in the company of those who spend most of their time around saloons. Besides the evil influence of indifferent, if not evil association, Michael had the old vanity of ancestry about him, in addition to his own personal vanity, now that he was a Squire, and therefore he resolved to send his son to that school where he would get the real *refined Yankee nasal* accent. It was in vain that his sensible wife warned him against the danger of sending their now only son, Patrick (for Michael and James got married, and Hugh had become a Christian Brother), to be educated at a school under sectarian influence, where all the teachers were educated in hostility to the Catholic religion. In vain she reminded him of the danger to his faith at a school where religion, the best branch of education, was omitted, if a superstition was not substituted for that essential ingredient in every sound system of instruction. In vain she reminded him of the instructions of his old parish priest, who inculcated the obligation on parents to see to it that their children learned their prayers and catechism and religion first, and then they would be more fit to progress with secular learning and science.

"That's all right, my good woman," he said. "I do not forget my early training, and approve of prayers and Catechism as much as yourself; but what is to hinder the boy to take his Catechism with him to the Yankee school, or if not that, to study it when he comes home every evening?"

"He could if he would," rejoined the wife; "but it so happens that those who go to those Yankee schools do not care for Catechisms or anything else good. See how those boys, the Cronins and Brennins, went to the bad from the teaching they got at these schools."

"I will see to it that he studies his Catechism. Will not the priest take care of that, for has he not a class three days in the week of children under religious instruction in the Church?"

"I know his Reverence has, but has he not had great trouble to get all the children to attend, some having one excuse and some another? Does he not tell us that those who neglect the religious education of their children are as bad as infidels? Believe me, the priest shall hear of your conduct if you send him to that school, Michael."

"Well, do as you like with him, he is your son as well as mine," said Michael, alarmed at the fear of having his conduct exposed to the parish priest. He was on the point of yielding to the prudent warning of his sensible wife, when Mr. Supple Hoskey, the famous schoolmaster, introduced himself, and joined in the conversation by saying, "Good day, friends. What, arguing I perceive, eh?"

"Yes," answered Michael, "Mr. Hoskey, you may say arguing. I was going to send this young lad down to the American Academy, at Brighton, but my old woman is 'tooth and nail' against it."

“What!” exclaimed the pompous pedagogue, “she is averse to sending this young man, as I call him, to school to drink at the fountains of elegant literature? What would this course lead to, but obliterate all the nascent stamens of his genius, and amalgamate all his dispositions to polite learning, which would ultimately eventuate in shutting out against him all the shining portals of promotion, and ultimate in his being an obscure, sordid tiller of the soil?”

“Well, I don’t entirely understand your bombastic words, Mr. Hoskey,” answered Mrs. Mulroony, “but I think it best to send him to school where his morals and education will improve together, and where the parish priest will have him under his control. Besides”—

“What care we, free Americans, for the dictates of retrogressive priests? Are we not masters of our own destinies under our glorious Constitution?” interrupted the pedagogue. “Education and religion are two separate departments, like two straight lines running parallel but never coming in contact, do you understand. Let priests and preachers mind their own business, or, as vulgarly expressed, ‘let the cobbler stick to his last,’ ha! ha! I am a Catholic, bred, born and brought up, but if a priest would have the audacious presumption to dictate to me, a free American, to what school I should go, I should at once have a petition drafted in the fairest caligraphy, ornamented with the choicest flowers

of my rhetorical and grammatical style of composition, and with the signatures of the best men of the congregation, forwarded to the bishop, and have him removed at once."

"Well, Mr. Hoskey," quietly rejoined the lady, "I can't keep up with your fine Yankee English—if English it is, and not a language they call 'balderdash,'—but if you say that education has nothing to do with religion, I say you lie (hee, hee, hee, I have a bad cough) under a great mistake, anyhow."

"What," roared the pedagogue, rising up, "do you give me the lie, madam? I can't stand this, even from a lady!"

"If you can't stand my plain talk, my friend," said she, ridding her pipe of the ashes, by striking it against "the hob," or hearth-stone, "you may sit it, or smoke it in your pipe, you poor brainless creature. I would sooner see that boy," said she, pointing to Patrick, "as ignorant as a nigger all his days, or dead, than have him made such a brainless half fool as you are, Mr. Hoskey. I am a woman who never says one thing and thinks another; but always speak the truth."

The "Professor" disappeared instantly, and poor Michael, feeling indignant at the roughness of his reception by his wife, took up his hat and followed the "Professor" with a view to apologize for what had happened. There was not much apology needed, however, for the latter was not very thin-skinned and was accustomed to no very

polite greetings from his countrymen, who detested his vain arrogance on account of his ignoring the land of his birth, and having renounced all practical connection with the Church of his Baptism, in order to deserve promotion in degrees of a secret and oath-bound society. Both the worthies having quitted the farm-house made their way to a whiskey-shop near by, where, after repeated drinks of a vile mixture named "unintoxicating bitters," the "Professor" succeeded in removing all the scruples which Mulroony had in sending his son to the Academy by dilating on the advantages it would be to the young man himself to acquire the polished Yankee accent, which would lead him to aspire to social eminence, and also represented to his half-intoxicated listener how the sending of his son to the Academy would strengthen his own prospects in a political point of view. "You are now simply a justice of the peace and chairman of the town Republican committee," said Hoskey, draining a tenth glass of the bitters, "here is to you, old man. Well, next year, or the year after, seeing you are so liberal and free by your not being a slave to priests in regard to the education of your son, you will get the nomination for sheriff or county judge, or some good-paying office, do you mind. Fill those glasses again; I guess it's your treat. Come, Mrs. Mastiff, two more measures of your anti-dyspeptic cordial. That grand stuff, sure marm, you may call it the 'eureka,' ha!

ha! Here's to you again, my friend; toss that off, 'twill do you good.

"Then again, as I was saying," he resumed, laying his hand on the old man's shoulder, "your son, now blooming into manhood, wants to go into elegant society. That will be quite easy for him to do in the town of Brighton, where they hold "sociables" every night in the week, where there are plenty of *orders* such as "Templars," "Sons and Daughters of Temperance," and if he likes it best, "Odd Fellows" and "Free Masons," and plenty of *nice girls*, ha! ha! you understand. I love the society of the sex, you know, Mr. Mulroony, dearly. I love them, the sweet creaturs, ha! ha! haw I do."

Michael was "half seas over" and had not much to say, the voluble tongue of the "Professor" being in continual motion, like the pendulum of a clock. But when he held up to him as an inducement to his son the chances of secret societies and female sociables, promiscuous introductions, the old man interrupted the pedagogue, telling him that his son Patrick should never, he hoped, get entangled in the meshes of a secret society, and as for the "sociables" and other schemes of incompetent and uneducated sectarian preachers to try to fill the deserted benches of their unholy, unconsecrated temples, he hoped his son would keep clear of all such, and he would warn him to do so, that he would.

"Oh dear, no, Mr. Mulroony," said the dissembling Professor. "I do approve fully of your resolution. I only hinted at those advantages, if the young man was inclined that way, as all of us native Americans are, you know. I did not mean to give prominence to those advantages; no, not by any manner of means, Mr. Mulroony. It is my treat now, I believe. Two more full measures of your soul-inspiring beverage, Madam Mastiff, dear."

"Run, Melinda, and wait on those gentlemen. Hurry up here, hussy," exclaimed the landlady.

More and more of the bitters were drank till Mr. Mulroony's mind, as well as his vision, was dulled, so far dulled that he received the Professor's explanations satisfactorily. All his scruples in regard to the course of education he was to give his son were removed, and next week, in spite of the opposition of his sensible wife, Patrick was sent to the Yankee academy at Brighton. The Professor and himself had frequent meetings at Mrs. Mastiff's, who, notwithstanding her unwieldly monstrous bulk, aggravated by a lame arm and a blind eye, was all smiles and very active in supplying her customers with her mild bitters, till both become so besotted, enfeebled and helpless as to be unable to stand up or take themselves away from that den of Satan where the foundation was laid and the seeds sown of the evil fruits and deplorable consequences which are recorded in the sequel.



CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING OF "SAINTS" IN DEVOTION AND DELIBERATION.

IN the vicinity of the town of Brighton it was usual with that sect whose principal devotion consists in loud groans and hysterical gestures of the body, to hold a camp-meeting. The *pious* gathering was located in a small grove of oak timber known as "Coon Grove," bordering on the Irish settlement. And this situation was chosen in preference to many other more attractive groves, it was said, in hopes that the benighted children of St. Patrick in the Irish settlement might be attracted by the pious noise therein made, and afterwards converted to the enlightening tenets of Methodism!

At the first "camp-meeting" held in Coon Grove a ludicrous incident took place, which wanted but little, however, of becoming a rather serious affair. The grove in which the *holy* exercises were held in earlier times had been known to most of the oldest settlers of the Irish township

as the haunt of bears, several of which had been killed from time to time. It was customary when a bear was tracked to the grove, or seen near it, to raise an alarm and collect all the men who had guns or dogs in order to surround Bruin and slay him. A young lad who was sent from the Irish settlement to drive the cows home, hearing the groans and pious growlings of the Methodists, concluded that bears were held at bay by hunters' dogs, hurried back arousing the neighborhood by the repeated cry of "Bears in Coon Grove! bears in Coon Grove!" In a short time the "tally ho" was raised through the settlement. The cur dogs barked, the hogs grunted and fled, children screamed, and men ran with rifles and shot-guns primed, loaded and cocked, each expecting to get the first shot at the "critter." When coming near the grove the hunters approached stealthily while the line of armed men was closing around the spot from which the noise proceeded.

Silence and suspense held the most eager quiet for a considerable space of time, when suddenly, one of the men having slipped over a log, his fowling-piece was discharged, the contents going in the direction of the pious crowd, over whose heads the buckshot audibly whizzed through the grove. Elder Bull, who conducted the saintly exercises, hearing the report of the gun, and turning down the pupils of his eyes from under their lids, soon saw the cordon of armed men approach-

ing like so many hostile Indians in ambush, and leaping from his elevated platform to the ground, a distance of about ten feet, and exclaiming "Good Lord save us!" made off as fast as he could towards the village, followed by many of his hearers. The hunters, perceiving the blunder made on both sides, began to laugh, and others to *bless* the author of the false alarm—the half-witted young lad sent for the cows.

Some time intervened before an explanation of the interruption could be received and order restored, whereupon the presiding elder came back, and finding, upon explanation, that the shot was accidentally fired, and also that a few of the hunters, having sent their guns home, remained for a while attracted by the novelty of the sight of several hundred people leaping, roaring, gesticulating, and calling on the Lord, and having come within the line of the preacher's converts' circle, the latter exclaimed in deep sepulchral voice, "Thank the Lord for this interruption, for, behold, two converts already received!"

One or two more of the Irish farmers, urged by their comrades, having remained, and taken their seats within the magic line, the elder exclaimed in still a louder voice, "Thank the Lord, two more converts!"

At last the farmers, offended at the fanaticism of the "reverend roarer," who wished to attribute to the miraculous influence of his preaching what

was due to curiosity only, and not what he called conversion, stood up, took their hats and left the place in disgust.

The rebuke of the peasants had no perceptible effect on the crafty assurance of the preacher, who, knowing well the natural calibre of his audience, enlarged, after the departure of the Irish farmers, on the miraculousness of the escape of himself from the buckshot of the discharged musket, assuring the credulous crowd that the charge of the gun was miraculously averted by the hand of the Lord, visible to his eyes, though they were shut; he also returned thanks to his Lord and Master, whoever that person was, who made good to come out of evil, and by saving himself from martyrdom at the hands of an Irish peasant, had occasioned so many of the benighted Papists to come within the influence of his voice, from which, for the first time, of course, those poor people had heard the sound of the "glorious trumpet of Sion." He had strong hopes that the stronghold of Antichrist at Irish Corners would soon be levelled with the ground, like the walls of another Jericho, and that conversions would multiply and a rich crop of evangelical grain would spring and ripen after the auspicious sowing of so much good seed to-day.

"It is a bad wind that does not blow in favor of any person," he remarked, and hence the incidents of this day, he hoped, would mark the beginning of an era for the conversion of the be-

nighted Papists of Irish Corners. The old man enlarged on this subject of interruption of his services and on his own worthiness in being the instrument in the hands of his Lord of the anticipated conversions of so many "benighted" Catholics, who were nothing better than idolaters and Philistines, that his fanatical hearers caught the same contagious insanity that took possession of their leader, and there were loud calls on the "Lord" for assistance to rescue the whole Irish settlement from the trammels of Popery, and to open their eyes to the glorious light of the new revelation made to John Wesley and his noisy followers.

Hence, after the exercises of the day were ended, the elder called a select prayer-meeting and council of war, as it were, in the largest tent in the camping grounds for the purpose of devising some efficient plan for the conversion of the Papists. The meeting consisted of all the preachers, the school-teachers, male and female, as well as the leading business men of Brighton. Brother Bull, the presiding elder, opened the deliberations by a lengthy prayer, in which, after recounting the idolatry, ignorance and obstinacy of the Papists, he besought of the Lord the conversion of the whole Roman Church, especially that portion of that idolatrous institution at his very doors in the Irish settlement. Brother Bull's voice was a deep bass one, of great volume and as loud as a cataract, and elicited frequent "Amens" and "The Lord grant

it," from all present. Brother Fribbler followed next in a sharp squeaking voice, but while he spoke no "amens" nor "glorys" were uttered, nor did the audience manifest any signs save disappointment at his violent gestures and abortive attempts to produce excitement among his hearers. At length, finding his animal strength exhausted, and that his own ardor was the very reverse of contagious, Brother Fribbler descended from his lofty flights of fancy, regarding what he saw in the Heavens over his head or what he would *compel* the Lord to do, or the inspirations which were infused into his mind from above, and becoming very calm asked the "brethering" what steps they proposed taking for the destruction of that branch of Anti-Christ's kingdom at their very doors, and the gathering of the little good seed that might be left after the Lord had applied His sickle into the Methodist fold?

"The Lord has told me," he said seriously, "that if I could only get into the Catholic Church at the Irish settlement, and address the benighted Catholics, that He would give them all into my hands."

After this speech there was a pause in the *holy* man's address. And he at last opened his eyes and looked around the crowd, on the faces of many of whom something like a sneer could be noticed. Brother Fribbler, either perceiving this, or having delivered himself of all his shallow head

contained, sat down, calling on any of the "brethering" or "sistern" to say what they thought of his proposition to get into the Catholic church and preach to the Catholics.

A Mr. Broadhead, the hotel-keeper, rose and said that there were two very serious obstacles to Brother Fribbler's proposition, even if, as he stated, the Lord had suggested the plan.

"First," said Mr. Broadhead, "the course you propose would be *unwise*, and secondly it would be *impossible* to do what you propose. It would be unwise to go into the Catholic Church to call the people idolaters and superstitious. I would be afraid, if Brother Fribbler did so, that he would soon be counted among the few martyrs of our church; for the Catholics would tear to pieces any man who would insult them in their own churches. Let the brother reflect how a Catholic priest would be treated if he came into our church and proclaimed us all heretics, that were to be condemned to hell fire! But it would absolutely impossible for our zealous brother to get into the Catholic pulpit. None but Catholic priests, and those approved priests, are allowed to preach in the Catholic churches; so if this be your only scheme to convert the Catholics, it is on the face of it an abortion. Can't come it, Brother Fribbler."

Rev. Brother Redtop now stood up, and with a voice of considerable sweetness and entirely free from excitement, proposed as his firm conviction

that if the church expected any success in the matter under discussion, namely the conversion of the Catholics, they must begin at the head and convert the Catholic priest first. He noticed, he said, some smiles of dissent on the faces of some present, but "them was his sentiments, accept or reject them who may. I have done speaking," said the bashful man.

After the brother sat down, a Mr. Macbeth, a merchant, stood up, saying that the spirit did not often move him, but he couldn't resist his impulse to say a few words pertinent to this important matter. The proposition of our genteel brother Redtop reminded him, Macbeth, of a story he read in a very old book, where, at a convention of certain animals he would not name, for fear of appearing personal, it was proposed by the wisest members of the convention to put a bell on a cat."

Cries of "Oh, oh! shame, shame! sit down!"

"No, no," replied Macbeth, "hear me out, I mean well. The mice proposed to bell the cat, and in like manner brother Redtop proposed to convert the priest. Now, to put a bell on the cat was hard enough to mice, but to convert the Catholic priest alluded to, who is a highly educated man, learned in Greek, Hebrew and Latin, to my certain knowledge, to do this by such trifling efforts as those proposed, is simply ridiculous."

The sensible merchant, having said so much, took his hat, stood up and departed, muttering a

sentence the last words of which were "confounded fools."

A miller present was called on, because of his being really a man of fine education, great liberality and sincere religious conviction in his creed, though not a noisy speaker. His opinion, though given in a very mild and calm form, corroborated those of Macbeth, the propositions of the ministers appearing to him, as he reluctantly stated, entirely impracticable. Being asked if he, the miller, Mr. Smith, had any plan to propose, to enlarge the scanty pastures of Methodism, he answered, No; but if they expected to have any success among the Catholics, which he very much doubted, they should give up abusing them so shamefully as is generally done by too zealous preachers, and journals of a mercenary character, such as the Harper's publications and the religious organs. The views of Brother Smith were unpalatable to the fanatical crowd, and he was soon *groaned* out of countenance by such words as "God forbid," "The Lord knows best," "Sit down, Brother Smith."

The chorus was next taken up by the "ladies," after a hint from Elder Bull, that probably the Lord would reveal his mind to the sisters on this all-important subject.

Mrs. Nugget was the first "lady" who stood up, after hammering on the end of a stool near her with her clinched fist for many minutes, crying out in a voice of fearful screaming, "The Lord will

hear me!"—whack, with her fist; "The Lord will come to me!"—whack, whack; "The Lord will strengthen me!" "The Lord will guide me,"—whack, "The Lord will help," "The Lord will save me!"

She then gave a narrative of her conversion, and that of her husband, lately deceased; how she converted three Swedes, two Germans, though the rogues went back again, and one Irish Catholic young woman, named Nellie Spittle. All these conversions the Lord made her the instrument of, and she would have a good deal more success only for the fact that Nellie, soon after her conversion, ran off with a backsliding Methodist, who refused to marry her, and left her in the city of St. Paul, on the streets. Now she could not get a single Catholic girl to live with her after they learned the fate, through that degenerate Methodist, of Nellie Spittle.

Several other saintly "ladies" gave their views of converting heathens and papists, but as their ideas were commonplace enough, such as coaxing girls with presents of dresses, and going to ride to church and camp-meeting with handsome young men, and going to sociables and such gatherings, we will pass them by, and conclude by giving the practical views of Miss Spoones, a young "lady of great knowledge and experience in the conduct of souls in the Methodist form of conversion. She, Miss Spoones, was sorry to differ in opinion with

all the speakers, lay and clerical, male and female, who had preceded her, while most of her sisters and brothers present, except, indeed, Brother Redtop (a bow from Redtop, who was her beau), spoke of their success in converting girls or ladies and women. She, Miss Spoones, thought that all the zeal ought to be applied in efforts to convert young men.

Cries of "Good! good," and "Glory! glory!" greeted this not very new idea. "Make sure of the gentlemen first," she continued, "and the ladies will soon follow them anywhere, especially into the love-cherishing enclosures of Methodist Christianity." Loud and long-drawn nasal "g-l-o-r-y-s" confirmed that sentiment of Miss Spoones. "And of course," she resumed, "as I am in favor of bringing that about through the missionary efforts of well-trained ladies, this is my plan."

She had been a teacher in their academy for many terms, she said, and she could boast of some experience in the training of minds of young gentlemen towards a religious inclination. She found her success was far more signal with young men than with young ladies.

"As for the old men and old ladies," she said, with a wicked leer in one of her eyes, in which there was a slight squint, "I confess my experience in such uninviting fields of labor to be limited indeed."

As Miss Spoones's speech was the closing one, it was understood that the matter under discussion was decided, and the deliberations of the pious warriors were brought to an end.

Miss Spoones was unanimously appointed head and leader of the movement inaugurated for the conversion of the Catholic settlement, and the academy, in which she was a "Professor," was to be the place in which the first steps were to be taken for that desirable enterprise.





CHAPTER V.

PAT BEGINS HIS "CURSUS ACADEMICUS," OR ACADEMIC COURSE.

‘*S* O, Mihil, you have conveyed off to the academy, our dear boy, Pat, against my wishes, and also the wishes of his Reverence, Father John?” said Mrs. Mulroony to her husband, one day as he sat down to dinner.

“Yes, dear,” keeping his eyes bent on his plate, “I thought it best to let him get a little more learning than I got myself. There is nothing will do for a man in these days in place of *high* education. A man must run a complete ‘cursus academicus,’ as Professor Hoskey calls it, before he can expect to rise to any respectable position.”

“What’s that you call it, Mihil,” she interrupted; “‘cursus academicus?’ Well, I hope it won’t prove a real ‘curse’—that academy—to him, as it has to many a one before him.”

“Why woman, how can it? Is not he old enough to judge for himself now, and has he not brains enough to distinguish the right from the

wrong? There is no use of our bothering the priest about these things. He has enough to do to attend to his religious duties. Besides, he did not forbid me to send Patrick to the academy."

"He did not, perhaps, forbid *you*. But did he not warn the congregation of the danger of trusting the education of their children to those who have as many religions as there are patches in a quilt, or of those who laugh at all religion?"

"Yes, Peggy, I know the priest gives such warnings, but those do not refer to us, but to such as have very young children. I am not afraid but Pat will be able to maintain his own among those academic boys. He is man enough to take his own part."

"Yes, among the boys he may, but how will he do among the girls? Don't you know that that school is a mixed concern of boys and girls, black and white, male and female, of all ages and colors? What a nice place you send your son to get the '*cursus academicus*,' or what I call the *curse* of the Academy."

"Oh, that's what you are afraid of, eh? I have no fear for my son on that head. None of my blood, I hope, will be caught in a net of female adventurers, be they white, black, or yellow. I sent him there to learn science, and not to spark or court; for without science, there is no chance for a man in this country. See myself, I can get only to be justice of the peace—at most sheriff;

whereas, if I had the education of Professor Hoskey, for instance, I might be judge or senator. You don't understand these things."

"'Deed I don't, thank God, and besides, I am sorry you ever got an office, for since you got that mean office of J. P. you now hold, you are sadly changed for the worse. You frequent saloons, are out late at nights, neglect your prayers and the church and sacraments, and are not the same at all you used to be, God help you," she said in broken accents, with tears in her eyes. Her poor husband seeing his wife in tears was at once silenced, and approaching her, caught her hand in his, saying—

"Oh, Peggy, agra, let us drop talking in this way. Don't take everything to heart so much as you do of late. It's not lucky. I am afraid something evil is going to happen, when I hear you always warning and reprimanding me. Dry up a 'cushla;' I can't eat my meal, or do anything, if I see you in such trouble. There is no danger, all will be well yet. We can keep the boy at home, if he says there is any danger of his learning evil in that school. Be good now, be good."

The preceding conversation will serve to give an idea of the motives that actuated the minds and dispositions of this honest couple. Both were honest, sincere, and well meaning. The husband's predominant passion seems to have been vanity. He had all the manly virtues of candor, honesty, purity, benevolence; but his highest

ambition was to be somebody; to hold office; to excel; to have the applause of his fellow-men as well as the approbation of his conscience. His wife, on the contrary, had no ambition save to please God and to keep herself and her children free from the contamination of the world. What were office, fame, and wealth to her, she thought, if they may become an impediment in the pursuit of virtue, sanctity, salvation? Her husband applauded and seconded his wife in all her practical charitable good works, whether for the dead or the living, and allowed her a liberal use of money for carrying out her pious intentions. But, while he loved his wife for her piety, her fastings, devotions and liberal offerings for the suffering souls, and other pious intentions, he found it easier to approve and encourage those pious works in his wife than to practise them himself. Hence, though he urged and talked in favor of his church, and liberally contributed to every good work, he had always, it appeared, a very sensitive feeling of aspiration after popular applause. Noboby had a greater contempt, if not abhorrence, of the low vices of the age and country—such as fraud, sensuality, or avarice; and none had a greater desire to be regarded as the first in the practice of the opposite virtues. Mulroony was regarded as the best of neighbors, a good citizen, a good husband, a good Christian; in a word, a *white man*; while his wife did not concern herself about the opinions

of other people, though she was really a superior woman of her class, and, before God, probably a saint. In the words of a classical author it may be said: "*Victor causa Diis placuit Victa Catoni.*" "His wife succeeded in pleasing God, her husband pleased the people." The virtues and life of the one were human, those of the other divine. The training the father would give his son would make him an Esau, a man of the world, while that of his mother would make him a Jacob, a man of God. But the die was already cast. As the old Greek proverb has it, "*He arke to emisu pantos,*"—"The beginning is the half of everything." Young Mulroony had now made his *dèbut* at the academy and embraced a course of education and surroundings which formed an event in his life, and, from this first day, exercised a controlling influence on his future life.

During the first few days of young Mulroony at the academy of Brighton, he encountered trials and difficulties which might overwhelm one less self-reliant, but he not only stood out bravely against the taunts, quizzings and insults of his fellow-students, male and female, but triumphed, in the end, over the combined petty persecutions of the entire school.

He reached the academy at an earlier hour than usual, and having seated himself at a bench far back in the main school-room, he was first assailed by the titters, jeers and vulgar remarks of the squad

of romping girls, whom, peeping at the door, he heard saying, "I wonder who that pug-nosed chap is?" Another would reply, "Why, that's not a boy, but a young lady in bloomer costume; don't you see how he blushes and keeps his head stooped." "How do ye do, Flora, he! he! he!" "I'd like to kiss him for his mother," exclaimed a third, "even if he is a bloomer, he! he!" "I wonder who put on that paint on his cheeks?—indeed, it's purty." These remarks were generally greeted with shouts of uproarious laughter, which were renewed again and again, with stamping on the floor, as often as the cunning rogues noticed the faintest smile on our hero's lips. "Run, girls, run for the bare life; he is ready to go for us," another would cry, and they would all run down stairs, pell-mell, expecting, if not *hoping*, that he would give them chase.

But the merriment comes suddenly to an end, and the excitement visible in the countenance of the "young ladies" showed the shrewd principal of the institution that something unusual had occurred. She made haste to ascend the stairs, and, having taken her seat at her desk, perceiving that a new pupil had arrived, from the parcel of books he had by his side on the bench on which he had modestly seated himself, she beckoned to him to come forward to give his name for registry on the roll.

There was deep silence in the school-room, and for a few moments all eyes were riveted on the new-

comer, not a few in admiration of his graceful form and beautiful face. But when he, in a modest though clear voice, gave his name as Patrick Mulroony, the whole school was convulsed in a fit of laughter, which could be compared to nothing else than the neighing of several scores of young colts, all at the same time. The principal, though her affected gravity was not proof against the contagion of laughter, came down several times with the ferrule on her desk, proclaiming "Silence," "Silence," repeatedly, and crying "Order, order," "Shame to the girls at the front desks." She placed the new scholar in the first class, and seated him at a desk to the right of her own, where he was secure from the annoying gaze of most of the scholars.

He enjoyed comparative peace during study-hours, but during recess, and after school was dismissed, the boys greeted him with the most insulting epithets and jeers, the girls always encouraging them and applauding all their rudeness by their presence, and the pleasure which the coarse language of the boys gave them. "How are you, Mr. Mul-ro-o-o-ny?" they would cry, while others would call him "Fooldoony" or "Mulcoony." Some would ask him how near related he was to "Saint Patrick," and "how many potatoes it took to make the Saint's beads." Then they would ask him some insulting question about his mother, or if he had a sister named "Biddy Fooldoony." Again they would taunt him with

being the beau of old "Skinflint Spoones," because that lady had placed him at a privileged desk. Our young tyro bore with these taunts, jeers and insults patiently for about a week, till at last his patience gave way, and one evening, while being snowballed by six or eight of the largest boys, he faced the whole squad and discomfited them. Three of his assailants he tripped, a couple more he kicked, and one tall fellow, whom from his form his classmates called "Spike," he seized by the collar and elbow and flung into a deep snow drift, where he got nearly smothered. Thus the young man who, from his silence and modest demeanor, was called the "girl in pantaloons" by his schoolmates, soon proved that he was as brave and intrepid when aroused, as he was quiet and unassuming when unprovoked.

But there is trouble in store for him, for some of the scholars whom he used so roughly were seriously injured, and especially the one called "Spike," who got out of the snow-drift with difficulty. And what added more to the mischief, this victim was the son of the presiding Methodist preacher, Brother Bull!

There was great excitement for a few days among the retailers of small news in Brighton. The rumor was rife that young Bull was at the point of death, that he had been stabbed, that his spine was dislocated, in fact, that he had been assassinated by one of the Irish from the Celtic settlement.

Some were in favor of having the young culprit "lynched," others were for having him arrested, but all, even the most moderate of the citizens, favored his expulsion from the academy. But, unluckily for our young friend, none of those measures were carried out, and after a rigid inquiry into all the circumstances of the case he was acquitted of all blame.

'Tis true, brother Bull and his fanatical brethren were in favor of the most extreme measures, but there were others whose opinions carried more weight than that of the senior Methodist preacher, and conspicuous among those was the teacher, Miss Spoones. She bore testimony to the young man's uniform mild demeanor in school, to the persistent annoyance of his comrades, which he had borne so patiently for several days. And besides, she told the inquisitors that he was not only mild, talented and well-behaved, but also very obedient and easily induced to participate in the "moral and religious exercises of the school," as she called them. After having spoken so far reasonably, she then, comprehending the calibre of those who constituted the investigation, appealed to their fanaticism, by assuring them, *sotto voce*, that all her hopes of progressing the "work of the Lord" at the Irish settlement were centred in that young man. "He had already," said Miss Spoones, "learned two nice Methodist hymns, adopted and repeated the words: 'Thine is the power, the

kingdom and the glory,' after the Lord's prayer, though the Catholics rejected those words. He promised to attend the next "sociable" at Mrs. Nugget's, and there was no doubt but he would be a convert after the next camp-meeting in Coon Grove."

The opinion of Miss Spoones was seconded by most of the *pious* young ladies present, who thought it a pity that such an interesting young man, though he bore such an Irish name, should be driven from the academy.

This was the unanimous view of all the young *pious* ladies, who, it appears, are as great admirers of beauty, gallantry and bravery in young men as those ladies generally all over the world are who do not make any loud professions of piety. Hence the women carried it. Let brother Bull's awkward son "Spike" get over his injuries as he may, and the others who were hurt from the rough handling of young Mulroony nurse their pains and sores, but let not the latter be expelled, and the prospective triumph of Miss Spoones be marred thereby. This was the decision, and the investigation closed.



CHAPTER VI.

“NOMINA HONESTA PRÆTENDUNTUR VITIIS.”

“SPECIOUS NAMES ARE LENT TO COVER VICES.”

AT the Irish settlement was a sort of public-house where small wares, such as friction matches, tallow candles, candy, soap, and a few other articles of common use among the lowest class of farmers, were retailed. But the chief articles of commerce and of profit to Mrs. Mastiff and her husband who *ran* the establishment, were bad whiskey and damaged beer. We say the house was kept by Mrs. Mastiff and husband, for she was the principal of the firm, he merely her tool, hired man, who got no pay,—or her slave, for though the old lady, as he called her, was drunk one half of the time, and the other half, save when there were plenty of customers, scolding and abusing poor Faddle, even to blows; he, the poor man, never dared to have a frown on him, but seemed happy when his braver, if not better half, kicked him around the house. He was the best trained and disciplined Mastiff in the world;

for to all the abuse, maledictions and strokes of his *mild* wife he never resisted by a kick, a cuff, a growl, or even an indignant look. How in the world he got the name of Mastiff was a mystery. Perhaps, as some said, he borrowed the name from his wife, or, if originally he had any of the mastiff in him, he resigned it so completely to his *lady* that there was not enough of the bold material left as would do to supply a sickly poodle of three months of age, not to speak of a mastiff. There were many theories on this subject of Faddle's name, but on the principle of "*Lucus a non lucendo*," or as we call a very dark person "*shawn bawn*," or the "white-headed boy," so our country merchant was called Mastiff, or some of his forefathers, if he had any, to remind them of qualities in which they were remarkably deficient. But how wonderful is the compensating economy of nature. If poor Faddle Mastiff was entirely deficient in grit, tenacity, or other canine qualities, his only daughter Melinda had enough of *canine* and *feline* qualifications as would make up for the deficiencies of her ancestors for six generations back, if they could be possibly traced. If the mother, the "muckle brute," had the head of a bulldog, and the ferocious mouth of a wildcat, the daughter looked like a cross between a wildcat and a fox, with the crouching ferocity of a hyena. Both mother and daughter were victims of drunkenness, and in their sober hours left nothing undone to

defraud the fools who frequented their den out of their money. They adulterated the liquor, thus rendering it, such as it was, doubly poisonous; they defrauded the customers in measure and weight, as well as of their change, while the old reprobate, the mother, entertained her company with all the scandal of the county, and when that failed she drew on her own imagination to supply the lack of public scandalous news. What made all this worse was that Mrs. Mastiff's house was situated in a very public place, within a short distance of the church, by the side of a living stream, and day or night, Sunday or holiday, she kept her doors open, like another public place, whose name I won't write in English.

"Noctes atque dies patet Atri janua Ditis."

It was at this establishment, unfortunately, that many of the honest farmers of the Irish settlement spent their time and their money, notwithstanding the repeated denouncement of the place, on account of scandals and fights on Sundays, by the parish priest, Father John. The Mastiffs were strangers in the place, and it was doubtful if they were Irish, and no doubt professed to be Catholics for gain, and their low character was notorious, yet the Irish Catholics patronized them and spent many of their evenings there, attracted alone by their appetite for stimulating beverages, and some, no doubt, to get the latest scandalous news from Mother Mastiff!

This was the usual meeting-place also for politicians who came to "threat" their constituents a few days before election. Travelling peddlers, tinmen, and tree hugsters put up with Mrs. Mastiff, and some said that counterfeiters and dealers in "bogus" money were at home with her; but of this the writer cannot speak with certainty. It was here that the wavering Michael Mulroony was confirmed by the sophistries of Professor Hoskey to send his son to the academy to make him into a *gentleman*, and Mrs. Mastiff had near half the credit of having changed the opinions of Mulroony, for, while the Professor would be delivering himself of his "swelling and gigantic words," she would be mixing the liquors, and would occasionally whisper into the honest farmer's ear, "Be you said by the Professor. Don't mind what those priests say. They are always after the money. See me tryin' to make an honest livin' and that priest can't let me alone. The Professor will tell you what I am. I *taught* school in this counthry down *aist*. Take my advice and send your son to where the Professor tells you."

"That's my noble lady, Mrs. Mastiff," interrupted the Professor. "Madam, my friend here has sent his son already to the academy, and I can learn from that paragon of female education, Miss Spoones, that young Mulroony is at the top of the literary tree. By the by, Mr. Rooney, is not your name very awkward? Why not drop the 'Mul,'

and call it Rooney? Mind how I dropped a prefix to my name, which now stands honored at the head of all in the *keounty*. My father was called Whiroskey, but I, knowing better the effect of euphony, from my superior American education, cast off the first part, and now it is genteelly turned into what I am called, namely, Professor Hoskey. Make your son, my friend, to cut off the 'Mul,' and one o from Rooney, and then it will sound genteel—Rony."

"Deed, Misthur Mulroony, if I was you I would do as the Professor says," added Mrs. Mastiff. "Faddle Mastiff, did you feed the pigs and the hens to-night?" she said to her husband. "You are dozing there like a fool, so you are."

"Musha, sure I fed 'em, and the cows, and the geese, and the mule and the calves."

"Get away into the kitchen then, and wash the dishes."

"As I was saying, it might be a good thing to change your name, Mr. Mulroony."

"No, not a bit of it. While I live not one of my family shall change their name, except my daughter. The Mulroonys have stood a thousand years in the ould sod (would I never left it), and I hope it will be a thousand years more ere any of my descendants will dare to change a letter in our old name. If that be what you brought me here for to-night, Professor," he said,—for he had not as yet lost his judgment,—“we had better depart: your labor is lost.”

"Oh, oh! I beg your pardon, Mr. Mulrony."

"Not Mulrony; but Mulroony, if you please, Professor," interrupted the farmer, with somewhat of indignation at the affectation of Hoskey.

"Oh! excuse me, I beg your pardon; this Yankee tongue of mine, do you see, cannot well take in all the superfluous vowels of your Celtic original nomenclature. Bring us two more cups of your stomach regulators, Madam Mastiff."

"Melinda, fetch two more tumblers of the best bitthers; you know them."

"Thim ones that's fifteen cents a drink," asked the cute young Mastiff.

"Ov course, 'Linda. Those is gintlemin, and must get the best. Faddle, what are you doin' in here again; run out, I hear them pigs screeching in the snow."

"Musha, 'tis now I put a clane bed of sthraw undher thim pigs. Do you want to kape me out all night on account of 'em?"

"Good enough for you. There, gintlemin, is the nicest untoxikatin' bitthers in the State, though the priest says it is poison, God forgive him. I wish that priest would stop praiching his timperince, and mind his own business, and let honest people earn an honest living by selling good honest liquors, as I do. I wish he would, so I do."

"So I say, too, Mrs. Mastiff, a lady after my own heart, give us your hand," added the Profes-

sor. "Melinda, bring a third tumbler; you must have a treat for that sentiment about the priest."

"Melinda, don't bring but a small jigger for me, dear, for I have to jine all the gintlemin who drink here. The common people I niver jines in drinking."

"Now, Madam Mastiff, here is your very good health. I am glad to have one, at least, enlightened enough to back me in my ideas about priests and preachers. It is this, that they should mind their prayers and sermons, but let us gentlemen do as we have a mind to, without any dictation. I hope you agree to this, my friend Mulroony."

"No, I do not," answered the farmer, in a stammering manner; for he was already well-nigh drunk on the villainous *unintoxicating* bitters of Mrs. Mastiff. "Priests have charge of our souls from God, or they are no priests; as for ministers, I say nothing about them. But of priests, this I know—that—that—they stand in God's place to us in the Church; and we are bound to hear, obey and respect them, as the servants of God, while they do their duty."

"Ay, ay, while they do their duty, I allow," rejoined the Professor. "But that duty is altogether confined to spiritual things."

"Professor," interrupted Mrs. Mastiff, "I deny that they can interfere in *spirituous liquors*, which I sell without much wather."

“Ha! ha! ha!” greeted this retort of the now muddled Mrs. Mastiff.

“I agree with you, Madam,” he continued. “Spirituous liquors should be out of his jurisdiction to interfere in. Education, also, or anything infringing on the province of our laws.”

“Stop there now,” said the farmer. “You say priests should not interfere in education. I say they should. What is religion but the true education? To teach the young man how he shall go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

The Professor, seeing that his victim had not lost all reasoning powers as yet, continued to fill him with his vile beverages, till, like a poor innocent bird, charmed by the powerful poisonous fascination of the anaconda, he became an easy conquest to his wicked will. Hence he had the boldness to suggest to the farmer a second time, after he was once rebuked, the benefits that would accrue to his son in changing his name. The proposed alteration, he said, would enable the young man, after the acquisition of the proper accent at the academy, where he was at present pursuing his studies, to pass himself for a native of this country. He would thus rid himself of the odium of having been of Irish parentage or birth. He could next, after having graduated, by means of sociables and other popular amusements, be introduced into polite society. From that the ascent was easy through any of the respectable secret

orders, such as Knights Templar, Odd Fellows or Freemasons, to the highest political and social distinctions.

"I have already advanced a good many beings up the ladder," whispered the Professor, "but I am alone among all the young men of my kin and class, owing to the foolish prejudice of that little priest at the Irish settlement, who is ever pitching into secret orders, which he knows nothing at all about. I wish he would mind his own business."

"I wish he would, too," rejoined Mrs. Mastiff, arousing herself from a short snooze. "Shure he can't let me alone to make an honest livin', and I a woman who *taught school* and knows my *juty* as well as himself. If men get drunk in my house, I can't help it. I give 'um value for thur money. I am as honest as the sun, an' it's on Sunday I makes all mee money. If they comes in here at Mass time, I can't help it. I can't go to Mass myself, though I'm as good a Christian as the priest, every bit. I can't shut up mee house, and lose mee customers, even if Mass is goin' on. How onraisonable the priest is. I wish he was away, so I do. Did you ever hear, Professor, how that priest made me lose this eye, the best one in my head? Yes, he took it out shure."

"He did, eh? No, I never heard how you lost your eye. Let us hear how it occurred; and by the priest?"

"Yes, sure enough, he made me lose my best eye."

"Stop a moment," interposed the farmer. "Do you mean to tell me, woman, that the priest, any priest, ever deprived you of your eyesight? By George, I want you to prove what you say, or I will never darken your door."

"Yes, I will tell you how it happened. Me and another 'lady,' Mrs. Muggy, one day got into a little scrape. We had both a little too much taken. That was the fust time in a year I was a little tight. Well, we had a houl't of one another in the road opposite the church, and she was hol'ering and screaming, and the priest was comin' up the road in his buggy, and then when I saw him I started to run, and with that I fell on the ground, on my face and eyes, and as I fell, a sharp stump struck into my eye, and out it came; oh, how I did suffer! and I called the priest to come to me, and he went off. And so I lost my eye through the priest appearing. That's the way he made me lose my eye."

"Ha! ha! ha!" even from the Professor, greeted this account of Mrs. Mastiff's losing her eye, because the priest chanced to go by at the time that she fell.

It is thus that the visitors at Mrs. Mastiff's were entertained with conversation that would disgrace an idiot; and yet, days, weeks, months, and years were spent in such frivolous talk in

Mastiff's den of iniquity, where nothing was heard but blasphemies, slander and detraction, nothing practised but drunkenness, nothing gained, but time lost and money squandered, to the ruin of many an honest family. It was in this 'den' that honest Michael Mulroony listened to the insidious lessons of unhappy Hoskey. It was here that he was unwittingly seduced from his solemn temperance obligation which he held for so many years in Ireland and America. It was here he learned to waste his time and his money, and, finally, it was here, in the fatal hospice of Mrs. Mastiff, that he imbibed from her accursed hand the poisoned beverage, under the false name of a temperance drink, which rendered him stupid at first, and afterwards insensible, so that, on his return home to the dear wife of his bosom, his affectionate Peggy, he was upset with his sled in a snow-bank, where he remained all night, and was found early next day badly frozen, and with barely the life in him.





CHAPTER VII.

A RELIGIOUS "SOCIABLE" SEANCE.

THE village of Brighton is situated in the centre of a beautiful prairie shaped like a parallelogram, in extent about eight miles by twelve, and equally divided diagonally by a stream of considerable size, called "Pine Creek." The hamlet looked, at a distance, very bright and picturesque, shining on the prairie on a sunny day like a fleet of white-sailed fishing-vessels on the ocean's breast. To one approaching from the south or east, the entire village appeared, as it were, raised up from the ground, and apparently dancing on the prairie's surface; but to those who approached from the west or north, it was hidden under the shadows of the low hills and deep forests which bordered the town in those directions.

The village contained one or two hotels, several grist and lumber mills, the usual number of sectarian meeting-houses—seven or eight—and three school-houses, including the academy. There were also published, though not printed, their two

weekly newspapers, continually engaged in a low verbal warfare, and yclept, respectively, the *Democratic Guide* and *Republican Standard*. Besides the neat, well-painted stores and shops which lined the main street of this enterprising town, there were in it also a number of tasty residences, some built plainly but substantially, and some aiming at the distinction of a mixed Gothic style of architecture, but all, however, inexpensive, and constructed of wood, or "frame," as it is popularly called. Among the first, if not the very first, among the cottages of this character, was the residence of Mrs. Captain Spoones and of her accomplished and only daughter, Miss Polly Spoones, the popular principal of the village academy, whose praise was often the theme of many an eloquent sermon by the preachers of all the different denominations in the town and country around for miles, and whose acquaintance, we presume, the reader has already made in previous chapters of this narrative.

Madame Spoones was the relict of Noah Spoones, late Captain of a government gunboat on the Mississippi, during the rebellion. He served with great gallantry through the late civil contest, but just as he had succeeded in earning his laurels and filling his "Sea Chest" with as much rebel booty as it could hold, the gallant captain died of small-pox, contracted from a rich cashmere shawl, abstracted from the infected wardrobe of a wealthy planter's wife, and which his desire to present

something grand to his own wife induced him to pack up with his ample booty of gold and silver. Poor, brave hero! he died a victim to his love of making his home elegant and his family fashionable. But Providence cut off his career unexpectedly before he had time to enjoy the fruits of his victorious conduct in the navy. If he lost his life and two of his sons, and left a wife, who was once comely, deformed in features, yet the loss was not as "unbearable as it might have been," as Elder Fribbler said when he preached his funeral sermon, "for, thank the Lord, his '*widder*,' though she lost her beauty by small-pox, saved the captain's chest, and that was one great consolation." It was evident to the merest casual visitor that the late captain's chest was saved from the ravages of small-pox or death, for the rooms of "*widder*" Spoones' cottage were literally lined with splendid paintings, rich tapestry and costly curtains, while the tables and cupboards groaned under their weight of solid silver services, consisting of dishes, baskets, pitchers, spoons, knives, forks and platters. The captain was under command of General Butler for a time, in Louisiana.

It was here in the cottage that the great opening "sociable" for the season was inaugurated. This one religious gathering gave tone to all the others that were to follow, and all were invited to be present, and all the world in and around Brighton were there, those alone excepted who did

not belong to the "Evangelical" churches, and even those, if they presented themselves, would be received. All the village preachers were present—Bull, Fribbler, Redtop, Squires, Comes and Coons. The merchants, of course, and their families, for the sake of gaining patronage for their stores, were there. The teachers, too, and some of the more advanced students, and among them our young friend Patrick Mulroony. All the pretty girls from a range of ten miles around were there, and many young men from twenty and thirty miles distance, the most remarkable among whom was a young Irish-American, named Nicholas Reardon, who never missed being present at any place where there was fun within fifty miles of his home. "Nick," as he was called, drove a splendid team of dark iron-gray horses before an elegant sleigh, well cushioned and robed, and hence he never wanted company in his wide wanderings in search of that fun he so dearly loved, and which seemed ever to play on his comic, laughing countenance. No matter whether it was at camp-meeting or at protracted meeting, at ball or sociable, at spelling-school or singing-school, at a revival or a love-feast, at picnic or church fair, or Sunday-school excursion, or any other such haunts of pleasure, "Nick" was sure to be present, and always at the "nick of time" to escort thereto or therefrom any nice young ladies who wanted to ride. Nicholas Reardon was the only son of a wealthy Irish Catholic, from the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix, who gave him his own way, very imprudently

imagining that children were as easily trained in this as in the old country. The young lad was, of course, nominally a Catholic, and though known as such, and regarded as a "right good fellow," and the very antipodes of a shining Methodist, for his laughing face was a perpetual protest against hypocrisy, yet he was received cordially, and welcomed as one of themselves, at all the "sociables," "quilting-bees" and auxiliary contrivances of Methodism.

Once on a time, when Elder Bull, who often remarked, regarding Reardon, "he will be one of us yet," making bold on "Nick," invited him to come to his meeting-house to hear him (Bull) preach, adding as an attraction that "he could get acquainted with very nice girls in his church, at *the late night* services," Nicholas replied by saying, "No, I don't want to practise hypocrisy in getting acquainted with young women. I am not Methodist enough for that. I am acquainted already with as many girls as I want. I can beat your preaching all to pieces in making acquaintance of young ladies by my fast-trotting horses, cushioned cutter, and warm, well-lined wolf-robcs. I rely on the real wolf-skins, rather than trust in your wolf-in-sheep's-clothing suit in taking in the girls, ha! ha! ha!"

This rather severe rebuke on the kind preacher's well-meaning inducements to young Reardon to join his sect, through a channel which he thought would reach his predominant passion, discouraged the preacher very much, and ought to have taught

him that Irish-Americans, though they may become indifferent or reckless, are not easily drawn within the meshes of such transparent humbugs as a Methodistic "getting religion" profession.

This evening at Miss Spoones' "sociable" there was a rivalry apparent in the crowd in regard to the popularity of two young Irish-Americans, Mulroony and Reardon. The young men themselves, however, were unconscious that they were made the heroes of this petty religious social gathering. The opinions and the interest which the crowd at this "sociable" took in those two imprudent young men were divided in a marked manner between both of them. The most lively and pleasant of the young ladies present, if we except Miss Spoones and a few old maids, were clustered in a close bevy around the circle which had Reardon for its centre; while all the preachers—except Redtop, who was jealous of our hero—and the most remarkable people for piety, so called, looked up to, encouraged, flattered and hung on the smiles of Mr. P. M. Ronay, the talented young student, as they called him. All that loved "fun and frolic" were around the devil-may-care driver of fast horses, "Nick," but all who sighed for the extension of the borders of "shaky Methodism" by adding to its numbers through conversion—all these were gathered around our young student. True, Mulroony, or Ronay as they called him, was much more reserved and silent than his rollicking compatriot, Reardon, and

provoked not a tenth of the laughter and merriment of the latter. But the former was a much more handsome fellow, though shy, and he was infinitely better educated than funny Nicholas. Besides, Mulroony, on the very forenoon of this evening, had won a prize of fifty dollars, offered by a merchant from St. Paul to the student who would solve in the shortest time a difficult problem in algebra, proposed by him to the most advanced class in the academy. It took our young student but twenty minutes to work the problem, while six others in his class spent half a day in the vain effort to solve the puzzling question proposed. This smartness of the young American was the theme for hours of the conversation of the most grave portion of the party. The night was getting late, however, and the elders thought it was time to introduce piety. The young people had had enough, the *holy* men thought, of fun during the several hours enjoyed by them in games of "forfeits," "the needle's eye," "fairlanders," "Johnny Brown," the "old soldiers," and "hide and seek," in all of which plays, scenes not very modest happened. Now was it not time, to bring religion on the stage?

And after allowing scenes and actions among a promiscuous crowd of young people of both sexes that would not be out of place in any of the ancient temples of the Egyptian goddesses, these pious men of different religious sects intro-

duced their discordant chanting of Methodist melody by such ludicrous hymns as the following:

"Come, ye sisters, are you ready,
Are you ready,
Are you ready,
Come, ye sisters, are you ready,
With halleluia to praise the Lord?

"Yes, my brothers, we are ready,
We are ready,
We are ready,
Yes, my brothers, we are ready,
With halleluia to praise the Lord," etc.

The "sociable" of Miss Spoones broke up after midnight. Some of the girls were in glorious confusion while searching for their "things" in the room where they divested themselves of furs, hats and shawls in the evening. Others were helped to the sleighs by the boys, while others, already snugly wrapped in buffalo and wolf furs, were being driven home, at which they did not expect to arrive till daylight, behind fast horses, and in the company of fast young men!

And this is a specimen of the machinery by which sectarian churches manage to keep up an appearance of members and respectability. Yes, there is the "sociable," the "camp-meeting," the nocturnal "singing-school," the "night spelling-school," the "picnic excursion to the woods," the "sewing-circle," and, we may add, the com-

mon State schools—these are the seven sources from which sectarianism, and especially Methodism, expects to draft the auxiliaries to their legions of deluded followers.

Methodism, what a phenomenon in the variegated history of the delusions of the human mind! It is *called* Methodism, and yet it has neither method nor order. It is called a church, though it has neither a fixed creed nor decent hierarchy. It is called a religion, and yet it neither binds nor unites men to their Creator, nor to one another, for any man may become a communicant thereof, if he says he believes in a Supreme Being. In the old pagan times there were as many temples as there were vices, for avarice, lust and cruelty were worshipped; but all vices in modern times, with a few virtues, are blended up together, and they have but one religion, and that is Methodism. For in the most benighted pagan times never had avarice, carnal love, vanity, pride and hypocrisy more zealous adorers than at your sociables, camp-meetings and revivals. But, if you insist on calling the gigantic organization of Methodism a religion, then let it be called the religion, the nursery, the paradise of the animal passions, where the lowest instincts of our fallen nature find congenial nourishment and support. The old Romans worshipped all the gods, and erected the magnificent Pantheon to carry out that idea. But all the gods, from Jupiter and Juno to Priapus, can find a

congenial atmosphere in the liberal enclosure of modern Methodism. And this happens in all the ravishing enlightenment of the nineteenth century.

"O tempora, O mores!"





CHAPTER VIII.

INSTANCE OF RELIGIOUS COURTSHIP.

MISS POLLY SPOONES was a very interesting young lady of very pleasing manners, of decided accomplishments, but of very uncertain age. All that can be with certainty stated was, that she was not under twenty years, for she confessed to this herself, nor over forty, for those who described her as an "old thing" allowed that she lacked a few months of being two score years. She had a pleasing regularity of features answering to what we call a comely young woman, in all but her left eye, which squinted a little. She was what they call a blonde ; but, her hair having been kept cropped so closely, and what remained on her scalp being so saturated with oil, if not with pigment, it was difficult to tell what was its original natural color. Her figure was rather short and inclining to what is called *embonpoint*, and her bulk was further aggravated by the profusion of flounces, ruffles and puffs which surrounded her in various folds. She was the very antipodes of Rev. Elder

Redtop, her betrothed, who has called the morning of the next day after the "sociable." Poor, pious man, he appeared like a person half-crazy since the night of the sociable. His Polly, he thought, had not only slighted him, but become totally estranged through the winning graces of the young student—successful competitor for the prize problem. And then again, she was all in the student's favor, praising his talents as if she wanted to take credit to herself for his shining parts. He could stand all this, however, supported as he was by his *sanctity*, for was he not a licensed preacher? but, when he saw at the games and plays how Miss Polly wholly monopolized the student, and, especially in the play of forfeits, he saw her boldly go up and kiss the young blushing student with such coolness, as if she was used to do it often, and the young man comparatively a stranger, whereas his reverend self was her lover for over four years; all these considerations put him nearly beside himself, and that was his reason for quitting the "sociable" before the night was half spent.

Brother Redtop was a tall, lank young man; we must call him, through courtesy, of a melancholy aspect. He wore a profusion of thick red hair on his head and neck, but this is not why he was called Redtop. His father and ancestors bore the same name, but it seems Nature, like a good poet, who, in his description, makes the sound and sense of his verse to correspond, had adorned our Elder with a

red head, to agree with his euphonious name, Redtop. His forehead was very low and narrow, owing, no doubt, to the encroachment of his rich, shining hair. But if nature was a niggard in giving him a forehead, she compensated for its loss by giving him an extra large face. It might be said, without much exaggeration, that if his forehead had only inches in it, his face was almost acres in extent. His eyes were small, and sunk deep in his head; but then he had enormous ears, the *helix* and *anti-helix* of which seemed to be large enough to form the rampart for a respectable fort, while the lobes were so heavy and large as to be able to carry an ear-ring as thick as an ordinary crowbar. His neck, which was almost square in form, was of a brick color, and looked like a baked-tile for a subsoil drain, while his nose was a sharp pug, with his nostrils turned up and almost looking "vis-a-vis" into his eyes. His hoarse, chronic cough, at Mrs. Spoones' cottage, was the first intimation the inmates had of Brother Redtop's approach, and soon after, without waiting to knock or pull the bell, he entered the hall, where, having met the old lady of the house, he immediately asked to see Miss Spoones.

"Just go into the sitting-room, Brother," the old lady said, "till I call Polly, who has not come downstairs yet. She was up so late for the last two nights. Polly, dear," she cried in a loud voice, "make haste down, Brother Redtop wishes to see you."

"What!" she answered, "so early, and it not eight o'clock yet? I can't be ready to see anybody till after eight, ma."

"Indeed," muttered the divine to himself, "she is becoming mighty particular. I saw the time she would run downstairs to see me without waiting for the fixing of her waterfall. Well, well, well!" Then he stood up, looked around the walls of the room, scanned the paintings and elegant lithographic pictures, but saw nothing that attracted his attention as much as a painting representing the marriage of Jacob and Rachel, and here he thought how foolish it was in him not to have got married years since. He looked into the grand pier glass, examined his physiognomy, and muttered to himself, "I am really getting old and gray," and listened, when he heard a noise upstairs, to learn if his intended was descending. But no, those steps were her mother's, who had been up to talk to her daughter, to urge her to speed. "She is not acoming," he said, impatiently. Then walking around the room, he picked at the beard that grew upon his cheeks near his eyes, erected his ears, again listened, but no appearance still.

Finally he sat down, opened the Bible, read the seventh chapter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, where, among other things, he read these words: "But I say to the unmarried and to the widows, it is good for them if they so continue, even as I."

But this poor, sad preacher of the Gospel, as he called himself, was blinded, and could not see, owing to the violence of the carnal flame that impurely smouldered in his heart, and filled him with the rage of jealousy and concupiscence. He shut up the Bible, walked around the room again, and still there was no appearance. Finally he looked at his watch, saw that he had waited three-quarters of an hour, and taking up his hat and the umbrella which he carried, he opened the door to depart, when who should slide downstairs but Miss Spoones, who said :

“Why, Brother Redtop, what on earth induced you to call so early? This is a very unusual hour to make a visit; come back and be seated.”

“Well, my dear, you must excuse me for interrupting you, and probably breaking in on the pleasant dreams you were having after your happy party last night. I call this morning, Miss, on business, and that must be my apology for interrupting you.”

“Well, you are excused. What’s the matter, or can I help you to anything?”

“You *can* undoubtedly help me, but whether you *will* do so is what I am in doubt of, and what has brought me here this morning.”

“Well, Brother, come to the point at once. What’s your wish?”

“My wish is, my dear betrothed wife—that you are and have been these four years last past—that

you give up paying attentions to any other young man except me, or that something very disagreeable will happen. I will bring the case before the conference."

"Why, Redtop, you are losing whatever little sense you ever had, if you ever had any. I paying attentions to young men! How can you talk so, sir?"

"How can you deny that you were, at the 'sociable,' all attention on that young Irish popish fop, whom, to gain his favor no doubt, you assisted to solve that problem in algebra?"

"That's not so, Redtop; I did not aid him to solve that question. He did it himself, for he is a young gentleman of uncommon genius. I see it all, you are jealous, that's what's the matter."

"I am not jealous; no, far from it. But if the Lord had not given me strength above measure I might have been jealous, for did I not see you cling to that young man like a leech? How often did you not make out to kiss him during the play of forfeits at the sociable?"

"Why, you uncouth old stick, you, who would notice what happens in that innocent play of forfeits except a crazy, jealous fellow? Fie, fie; I thought you had more sense. Did *you* never kiss any young ladies at that play of forfeits, eh?"

"Yes, of course I did, and a thousand times, but that is different in your case. We are engaged to be married as soon as I get a call to a congregation, and you ought to behave yourself as if you

were my married wife. But now a handsome young fellow, a stranger, comes to the neighborhood, and you become at once his patron, his teacher and his advocate. Why, when, the other week, he almost slaughtered several of the boys at school, and nearly finished Elder Bull's son, you stood up for this lad against all the trustees of the academy."

"Yes, and I would do so again. Why did they not let him alone?"

"Well, I come now to bring this matter to a close, or to make an end of it. I want you to be ready to marry me in eight days from now, no matter whether I get an appointment to a congregation or not. This is coming down to the point of the question, Miss Spoones. I want an immediate answer, 'Yes' or 'No,' to this interrogatory."

"Well, Brother, I cannot agree with you at all on those terms. I cannot leave the academy till after this term is out. And you know it is only as long as I remain single that I am to have this respectable situation."

"I would not be so urgent but for all the talk there is about you and this plagued young man."

"What do we care for talk? If I take an interest in that young man," she said with a wink at Redtop, "it is, believe me—your own intended wife—with a view to effect a purpose that will not only confer honor on me, but perhaps on you as my husband, who will have the credit of making a

convert of this young, talented Catholic, and thus, perhaps, be the means of converting the thousands of his race and country that are scattered over our young State. There is my hand to you, Redtop, that I shall be true to you, as far as your and my interests will permit." This speech had the desired effect. Poor Redtop was satisfied. The tears ran down his parched cheeks. They embraced warmly. Breakfast was announced, and the melancholy divine drowned his sorrows for the time being in a good large bowl of hot coffee, with the more solid accompaniments of beefsteak and milk-toast.

"Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio."

When the consoled preacher left the comfortable mansion of Madam Spoones that morning, he entertained a more ardent love for his intended than he ever felt before; wonderful result of a good breakfast of hot coffee and toast, and the affectionate words of Miss Spoones. But though he felt rather happy, he was not satisfied with his feelings. He wished to be doubly sure of his prize, to have his reason convinced, as well as his heart satisfied, regarding the reality of the love of his intended. So, instead of going directly home to his lodgings over the village drug store, where he had his few books, called a library, and his bed, he wended his way to the farthest end of the village, to a family named Brooder, who were spirit-rappers, and where there was then stopping a noted

female medium who was ready, for a consideration, to reveal all future events of this or the next life.

Brother Redtop, in going to consult the "spirits," hoped that he could be able to speak to the medium without being seen by the family with whom she lodged. He was disappointed in this, however, and had to make known, through Mrs. Brooder, what was his business with the medium. He thought next to get to see the medium under pretence of preaching Methodism to her; but in this, too, he was disappointed, for the medium "meant business." She sent word to the preacher that she had no desire to hear what she called "Methodist humbug." So Redtop, like Saul, if we may compare small things with great, had to put off his subterfuge and pretended disguises, and besides, to pay his one dollar cash down, ere the medium would open her mouth about his troubles. He paid the money, however, though very reluctantly, for he was very short of that article, and having begged that the matter of his visit should remain a secret, to the public at least, he was introduced into a dark room, dimly illumined by artificial light, and, seating himself opposite the veiled medium, he heard the tap, tap, tap, on the small square table which separated him from her through whom the spirits revealed their secrets. Poor Brother Redtop could not, of course, interpret the raps either for or against his luck; but the medium, after taking a slate, on which with a pencil

she had marked or registered the raps and shakes of the table, went into an inner room, and in a few minutes she returned with a small sealed envelope in which the spirits, through the medium, had written the oracles regarding the intended marriage, at least, of Rev. Elder Redtop. When he emerged from the abode of the spirits he was covered over with perspiration, partly owing to the confined air and strange noises he heard, and partly through fear that any of the good Methodist people should see him emerging from a house, the inmates of which he had so often denounced in his sermons, as no better than infidels. After having taken a rapid survey of the street before and behind him, and hearing a titter as of women who mocked at him, he rushed forward at a rapid pace, and did not relax or halt until he reached his study over the drug store in the upper part of the village. Being in a great heat from the walk, and the room being overheated, he threw off his coat, and taking hold of the letter which stood in his vest pocket, he had just torn the envelope to read the contents, when, who should enter, without knocking, but Elder Bull, the presiding elder, as he is called.

“Beg pardon, Brother Redtop, for coming in without knocking. I want you to preach for me next Sabbath, as I am going to St. Paul to electioneer. I am going to run for the *Legislature*. You know those papists are going hard to try and

control our schools. Now is our time to put them down, you see. There is no use to preach to them. They won't listen to us. We must put 'em down by law. Now we have a good chance. The President and his wife are Methodists, and if we can get a majority of our folks in, we could re-elect the President, and elect him again and again, and perhaps put him in for life, and then we could have the game in our own hands. Perhaps the Methodist may become the established religion of the country. Do you see?"

"That would be a grand thing indeed," added Brother Redtop.

"Yes, no doubt of it. If I can go into the Legislature I will do something for the cause, and then you can have that congregation at Stony Creek. Then, my old boy, you will be in clover, living with your wife instead of being cooped up here alone like a monk."

"Indeed I am tired of this solitary way of living. I shall willingly supply your pulpit next Sabbath," said Redtop.

"That's a good fellow. I will go now. Oh! sure, I nearly forgot. You must preach next Sabbath against those spiritualists. They are taking multitudes of our people off by their devilish tricks. That's your theme now, for you, Brother Redtop."

"Well, I fear I am not well posted on Spiritualism. I had intended to pitch into the Catholics next Sabbath, on account of something I have

heard regarding their designs on our public schools. They want to have separate schools for their children, a thing that would very much favor their church. They must not be allowed to have separate schools. This is what I would like to preach on, next Sabbath; and, besides the good that it would do our society to prejudice the minds of our people against Catholics, I would like this theme from the fact that I have preached on it so often, that I need not be afraid of failing on it again."

"That's all right. There is a time for all things, as the Bible says. You will have plenty of chances to preach against the Catholics; but now I want you to preach against the Spiritualists, for many of our best people are joining them. Even here in this village the Jones, the McBeth and Brice families have joined them. Good-bye, Brother, till I see you again."

"This is truly a singular business. I am ordered to preach against a sect or system with which I have just been holding communion on very important business. What if I have been observed by any person coming away from the medium's residence, or if any of the family should be present in meeting while I am denouncing what I myself patronized a day or two before? Well, I must only take pattern by our great founder, Wesley, who never retracted his words, true or false. I am reproached with having consulted the spirits.

I must say that I did it to detect their errors and wickedness, that I sought ocular demonstration of their guilt. Even if I speak what is not true, I must stick to it, true or false, and repeat, repeat and repeat it over again, till I compel men to believe it, true or false."

It was thus that our pious Brother Redtop soliloquized ere he again, having fastened the door, consulted the letter from the spirits, which contained the revelation of the happiness or misfortune that was to be the lot in his intended marriage with his betrothed, Miss Spoones. The contents of the letter will be given in a future chapter of this history.





CHAPTER IX.

MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF AN INTERESTING YOUNG LADY.

HERE are many ways for a female to earn a livelihood besides scrubbing, washing dishes or mending stockings. So thought Miss Lizzie Skinner, of the village of Brighton. Miss Skinner was a lady who for over twenty years filled a prominent place in the public regard in her native village. She had been a teacher in the common schools, as well as Sabbath schools. She was a "class leader," as well as a leader in all the contrivances to promote the spread of Methodism, whether among the benighted pagans of India or Africa, or the unregenerate multitudes of her own countrymen at home. She was the most prominent person at sewing societies, sociables, camp-meetings, fairs, and religious excursions and picnics. In fact she was regarded as the soul of Methodism in the county. She was literally looked on as an institution necessary to the success of the spread of the tenets of the noisy sect. Such was

Miss Skinner twenty years ago. But those times were the "golden age" in her life. All her popularity commenced, flourished and showed signs of waning, too, in the pioneer times gone by. There were no railroads then in those parts, no sewing-machines, no telegraph-wires, no woman's rights conventions then to fall back upon for popularity, and hence she that was a heroine at that period, in all her bloom and all her influence, now, when all these things—modern progress—advanced, Miss Skinner found out, alas, too late! that she, too, was beginning to be slighted. "*Fuit Ilium!*" She was not the same in influence and importance, no more than in beauty and gracefulness, and she very gradually discovered a thing she never before feared or suspected, namely, that she was only an old maid. When other and brighter stars appeared on the popular firmament, her glories were not only dimmed, but almost extinguished. She struggled hard to maintain her social ascendancy by appealing to her experience, and recalling what she had done in the hard times in the past. But they only smiled at her. Even the preachers whom she had supplied for years with scented white pocket-handkerchiefs to use for preaching in the pulpit, and whose empty pews she had often helped to fill with hearers, even *they* ridiculed her at sociables, calling her "the poor, fussy Miss Skinner, poor thing!" The crowd which once hung around her now dropped off to hang on the swelling skirts of Miss Spoones,

or other budding beauties, literally turning their backs on our once celebrated beauty, Miss Skinner. She knew very well this was a fast country, but she had no conception that in the rapid progress of society she herself would be so soon neglected, despised, forgotten. Such is the fact, unquestionably, regarding the popularity of most women, and even men, in modern progressive society. No sooner does one wrinkle manifest itself on the fairest cheek of beauty, or one gray hair appear on the temples of noblest genius, than the tide of the fickle, popular applause is instantly reversed, and the croaking cries of "old foggy" or "old maid" are heard grating on the refined ear. Woe be to those who are popular to-day, either through moral or physical accomplishments, and who vainly hope that they shall continue popular forever! The more elevated their ascent, the more painful will be their fall, as fall they must, if they entrust themselves to the treacherous breezes of popularity. What happened to Miss Skinner on a small scale, will assuredly happen to the "biggest bug" of them all, who live on breathing, and aim at ascending into, the pleasant atmosphere of human glory by means of the light attenuated gas of popular favor. To most persons of this class we describe, it happens that they rise a little, then their ascent becomes stationary, till, like an exhausted balloon, they sink into inferior darkness, never to rise again.

Miss Skinner, however, was resolved that this

should not be her fate. The society which she had so long served, and in a manner controlled, she clearly saw now rejected her as a useless member, in fact regarded her a "bore," and she was determined to be revenged on society, if she could not regain her former place in its favor. She accordingly took her measures and matured her plans to be "even with them all, or lose a fall by it," as she stated to her cousin, Miss Spoones, whom alone she initiated into the secret of the course, which, after deep thought and mature deliberation, she was resolved to enter upon.

On a certain Fourth of July, somewhat less than two years before the occurrences related in the few preceding chapters of this history, there was a grand celebration at Brighton, with flags, music, salutes of artillery, and fireworks, and, in addition, a circus; all of which attracted a very large crowd of people from the country within a distance of twenty miles around, and it was on this very day, a year last past July, that Miss Skinner disappeared from the society of her native village.

After the day of the noisy national festival, it began to be asked among the ladies, "Wonder what has become of Liz Skinner? She hasn't been round since the Fourth."

The general answer to the inquiry was: "Oh! she will turn up all right yet, I warrant you. There ain't no fears that anybody fell in love and ran off with the like of her."

“That is likely enough not to have happened, but yet her cousin, Polly Spoones, knows nothing, she says, of her whereabouts, and her friends are getting alarmed about her. Perhaps those wicked, wild circus men took her off, or, may be, murdered her.”

“Don’t you be uneasy on that matter. When circus men carry off young women, the rascals never mistake such tottering institutions as Lizzy Skinner for one of those young ladies.”

Time went on for another week or two, and, as the absconding lady did not appear, then the public curiosity became excited, and all sorts of stories were put in circulation regarding the young woman’s sudden disappearance. Some stated that they saw her walking with a young man on the bank of the river close to the mill-dam, on the day of the celebration. They said the river ought to be dragged. Others were sure they saw her in a buggy with a gentleman, riding at full speed towards the Mississippi, and that it looked like an elopement, for they were going for the steamboat that passed south at noon. Most people discredited this story, while all were sure that “foul play,” somehow or other, had something to do with the amiable young lady’s disappearance. On the third Sunday after the mysterious event all the preachers had it as a welcome subject for sermon, prayer and comment. The “Lord” was appealed to very powerfully, after having been informed by

the preachers of what had happened, to restore her to her friends and the Christian community, whether she had been carried off by circus men, or abducted by Jesuits or Popish priests, for the pious men could not believe that any human being around here would be so diabolical as to murder such an amiable lady.

“Oh, ho! then there was a clue to the finding out where Miss Skinner was,” said Mrs. Nugget to Madam Spoones. “Did you hear what Elder Fribbler said last Sabbath, after returning home from conference from the city of Chicago, where he got the nomination for the church of Stony Creek?”

“No, I did not, for I seldom go to meeting of late, owing to my rheumatiz. What did he say?”

“He said, as distinct as I say it to you, loud enough to make me hear even in my deaf ear, that the Jesuits abducted Liz Skinner.”

“He did, did he?”

“Yes, he did. Did not Polly tell you all about the sermon?”

“No, Polly was not at meeting. She was out very late last night, riding with a young gentleman who accompanied her to the ball at the Railroad Hotel.”

“Oh, there will be terrible work, I’m thinkin’. It is certain that the Catholic priest, they call him Father John, was in our village on the Fourth of July, and that is the very day that Liz disappeared.

She was seen ridin' with a gintleman, most likely the priest in disguise, and drivin' like lightnin' toward the steamboat landin'. They say she must be gagged, or she would holler, sure. She is now, most likely, locked up in a cell in one of those convents in the city of Dubuque or St. Louis."

"Why, if she is, she is safe enough, for can't they be searched to find her there?"

"Those dreadful convents! Very doubtful. There are so many underground cells, and locks, and bolts, and chains and all thim things. Elder Fribbler tells me that if one is got in there they never can get out, tin to one."

"Polly, did you hear the news?" asked her mother of our academy principal, as she came downstairs about ten o'clock on the morning in question.

"No, mother, what is it?"

"Mrs. Nugget tells me that all the ministers yesterday, at night meeting, gave out that the papists got Lizzy, your cousin, for certain, in those convents in the city."

"Oh, mother! oh dear, dear! I can't believe that they could say so without any evidence."

"Yes, Madam, they did say so," answered Mrs. Nugget, "for I was present and heard every word, notwithstanding that I am a little hard of hearing. And there is no doubt of it, for the Catholic priest was in our village *all that day* she disappeared, or rather was stolen off, for such a sensible girl as she would not go unless force was used; not she."

"Of course I don't deny but the Elders will give some intimation of what you say; nor do I deny that the Catholic priest was in town. But sure that's no proof that he abducted my cousin. My dear, that priest is in town mostly every day, for there are several Catholic families in the village at present, and ever since the railway has commenced to be built. I know of course that cousin Lizzy has disappeared, but she was not so silly as to allow herself to be abducted in the broad daylight, and by a priest who was *all day* in town."

"Well, Miss Spoones, you can have your own opinion," rejoined Mrs. Nugget, "but as for me, I will believe what our holy preachers say, and all the world say, is so, than give in to what you state. You were not at the meeting yesterday. Good-bye, all," she added, departing rather huffed.

The excitement continued; anything and everything was stated as "facts as clear as day" among the people. The local newspapers next took up the popular chorus of "foul play," "abduction," "popish plots," "convent cells and chains, and locks and tortures." "*Vires acquirit eundo.*" The hint thrown out from the *truth-telling* lips of a preacher, just merely a little chaff, blown by his breath from the well-filled store-house of his false heart, soon flies from mouth to mouth, from house to house, from village to village, from State to State, ever increasing, multiplying and gathering strength, till the whole intellectual atmosphere is

blinded with the haze, bluster and dust of it; and what originated in a lying whisper of a silly fanatic or two is received all over the land with the deafening chorus of a well-known, acknowledged truth. It flies on the wings of lightning, that a Protestant lady has been abducted by the Jesuits. The news is spread simultaneously in all the capitals of the civilized world, and among all the nations of the earth. The sectarian journals write long homilies on the spirit of popery so dangerous to "our liberties." The secular press take the subject up again, learning that the people want to read of that abduction case in the Northwest; for they want, in order to make money, to pander to the popular frenzy. Meetings are held in the large Eastern cities. "Cooper Institute" and "Faneuil Hall" resound, for the thousand and one time, to the hoarse voices of preachers of every sect, denouncing the dangerous aggressions of popery, of which this most aggravated instance of the abduction of Miss Skinner is the strongest proof. Money is subscribed liberally by old misers. Protestant leagues against popery are organized. Petitions and resolutions are drafted to be presented to State Legislatures. Many moderate politicians, even, are of opinion that the Know-Nothing lodges ought to be revived again, for that this case of the abduction of a pious young lady, so as to lock her up in a convent, is occasion serious enough for the most extreme measures. This is proof

enough, 'tis as clear as daylight that our liberties are in danger. The Romans will subvert our government, and they must be resisted.

It is not singular that all these sects who attack the Catholic Church, seldom or never say, "Let us exterminate that institution, for no person can be saved who follows the Catholic faith and practice." No, no, they do not mean this thing; or perhaps they do not care what becomes of men's souls hereafter.

The sectarian preachers say exactly as the Pharisees of old said of Christ: "Let him be done away with, or the people will believe in him, and the 'Romans will take our country.'"

"Romani venient et tollent nostrum locum et gentem."

The very same words almost all the sects say to-day that the Jews did of old.

"The Catholics will gain all our people to their church, and rule our country." This is the bugbear that is held up to frighten old women and nervous, hysterical young ladies.

In vain the Catholic press, so feeble in its influence, for the want of support, set about contradicting the wild stories about the abduction of Miss Skinner. In vain they pointed out the absurdity of such a tale as the abduction of a poor, useless old maid, whom her own friends and her own society discarded as an eccentric, odd female.

In vain they asked, what could be the object

of such an abduction. How could it be effected in the middle of a long, bright, sunny day, in the middle of summer, with few or no Catholics present? This was all too late. The harm was done ; the impression made. All the whole world, outside the Catholic Church, received the story, and believed it no absurdity. And there was no power on earth, of the earth, that could now remove the false impression, correct the mistake, re-establish the truth in the millions of hearts in which falsehood had replaced her. So that, to the very end of their lives, and probably till the day of Judgment, the Satanic misstatement that originated in the heart of a cunning preacher of the Gospel, as he pretended to be, will be received and believed by millions of men as the very truth of God. This is a sad state of things, and instances of such popular delusions surely are not uncommon. They are, alas, more real than imaginary.

There was only one person in Brighton who could solve the mystery regarding Miss Skinner's "abduction," and that was Miss Polly Spoones, her cousin, but she, for reasons that seemed good to herself, kept very dark on this subject of her disappearance.

Poor Father John, the parish priest of the Irish settlement, and also of the town in which the mysterious disappearance happened, felt greatly annoyed that his name was mixed up with this affair. Of course he laughed at the story of her

abduction by himself or anybody else, in a jocose manner replied to his friends who, in *fun*, taunted him with his alleged exploit, by saying, "Never mind, we can survive all these ridiculous stories. They are not very complimentary to me, in making me the hero of this 'abduction.' Don't you think if I was inclined to 'abduct' anybody, I would not be fool enough to carry off such a fright as the female Skinner? Why, man alive, my pony used to get scared, every time I met her on the road, with her bundle of tracts. She was as ugly and wrinkled as the Witch of Endor. Confound 'em, as they were lying at all, why did they not say I 'abducted' some decent person?"

"I think, Father," said some of the Church Committee, "you ought to write to those newspapers which print such scandalous and unfounded reports of this affair."

"No, sir, no; not one line. If they are so degraded as to print such absurdities, let them. They are not worthy of being set aright. I do not care a straw for the slander on myself, but I pity poor human nature when I see how easily it can be humbugged. Why, some of those people in Brighton, who were friendly to me before this unfortunate event, and would shake hands, and ask me, 'How do you do, Father John; won't you come and have dinner?' now they pass me by without as much as a nod. How can I help it? This thing will be all cleared up before long. I

would not wonder if those unprincipled preachers were at the bottom of the thing. Probably, or at least *possibly*,—for we must not judge even our enemies rashly,—those people hid her off, in order to make political capital out of it. The presiding Methodist preacher here, I understand, is working hard, and has been for years, to get the nomination to run for a member of Congress, or some such office, and, as his own party is divided, and some of them will vote against him if he gets the nomination, this abduction case is only a ruse to excite the low Methodist masses, in order that they may all vote for him, the champion of the Gospel. These fellows are wise in their generation; but truth will triumph in the end.”

Time had passed, but no account came of Miss Skinner. Spiritualists were consulted, fortune-tellers approached, but the mystery still remained unsolved. The excitement which her disappearance had created, however, began gradually to calm. A terrible steamboat accident had occurred, a fearful colliery explosion happened, and a couple of murders in “upper ten,” if not in high life, came off; and those affording abundant subject-matter for the popular preachers of the day—the Beechers, the Bel- lowses, the Cheevers and the Chapins—for several successive Sabbaths, the Western abduction case of Miss Skinner lost its novelty, became obsolete, and was soon entirely forgotten.

The spirit which possessed the people during

the period of excitement seemed to have "gone out" of them, and they began to look like rational beings. Now, when they ceased to be "possessed," some of them began to feel ashamed of what they had said and done while under the influence of the "evil one." They saw how absurd were their suspicions, how groundless and rash their accusations, and hence, when Father John went around, as was his custom, on his visits to his people in the village, they began to nod at him, to salute him and ask how he was again. He, the good soul, returned their salutes cordially, though he neither offered nor listened to any explanations or apologies, but he never lost faith, but hoped, prayed and trusted that Providence would vindicate him from the evil aspersions that were so unsparingly heaped upon him, as on his Divine Master, and that the hidden designs of the wicked would be ultimately, if not speedily, brought to light. Just at the time of the disappearance of our lost young lady the people of the village, and indeed of the country, were startled by the advertisement of a celebrated "clairvoyant medium" who had arrived in town, and who promised to reveal all the future, as well as discover the secrets of the past and present. She announced herself as the seventh daughter of a father who was a seventh son. She revealed to one of our most illustrious Presidents his election long before he had dreamed of becoming a candidate for that exalted office, and she had foretold the breaking

out of the civil war, and the very day of its termination. This was a very good chance for the people of Brighton to learn what had been the fate of the missing young lady. But it would take several weeks, if not months, before the people were calm enough to think of consulting the famous Russian medium, Madam Fetoffskoff, as she named herself. She came to settle in the United States in preference to any other country from the friendship which exists between both great countries, for the reason that a Russian ambassador once married an American lady, and the two governments are the very antipodes of one another, and, like the poles of an electric battery, only harmonize by opposition. Hence, for several months, the celebrated medium had a great and lucrative run of patronage, and if not certain, it is more than probable that it was owing to the satisfactory responses she gave to all inquirers about the "lost one" that the public feeling so completely calmed down among the masses, and that, though Miss Skinner's disappearance was still involved in mystery, not a little was spoken about her during the almost two years of her absence, at the period of our history concerning which we now write. We shall have to chronicle more of her, most likely, before we conclude this narrative.



CHAPTER X.

AN EXTORTED CONFESSION WORTHLESS.

MRS. Mulroony spent a troubled and sleepless night at home, while her dear son Patrick was enjoying himself at the "sociable" of Miss Polly Spoones. The cause of her uneasiness was twofold: she sympathized lovingly with her dear husband, who lay seriously ill from the effects of the severe injuries he received in getting his lower extremities frozen during the time he remained in the snowdrift on the night of his last visit to Mrs. Mastiff's saloon. And, though the doctors who attended from Brighton daily made light of his injuries, and promised to have him all right in a week or two, she, poor woman, had her misgivings, and entertained very serious fears of his death from those apparently superficial injuries. She was a pious matron, who, under the external appearance of a very ordinary woman, led a very mortified and holy life, and practised rigid austerities; as, for instance, abstaining from flesh meat during all Lent and Advent, and fasting

on one meagre meal Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays through the year. She was, besides, a woman of a very superior mind, and this, together with her unassuming piety, made all her acquaintances, not excepting the priest, Father John, to regard her opinions, judgments and presentiments as something partaking of the nature of predictions. She shed tears very abundantly, much against her will, ever since the accident to her beloved husband, and when the doctors, noticing her grief, encouraged her to be of good cheer, that "the old man would be all right in eight or ten days; there was no need for alarm," she shook her head in doubt, and merely answered, "God grant it,—His holy will be ever adored."

Besides the care and trouble from this source, the pious matron was not a little disturbed at the conduct of her son Patrick. He had, since he went to the academy, begun to be changed in his manners and habits. During the past month or six weeks, he was frequently absent from home till after dark, a thing very unusual with him before he went to the academy, and now, on the night of the "sociable," he did not return home till after midnight. She began to fear that something had happened him, muttering that "misfortunes seldom come alone," when, hearing the sound of sleigh-bells, she saw in the dim, fading light of the setting moon her son dismount and enter the garden gate, after a cordial adieu to his companion, who appeared

to his mother very much like a female, but "sure," she said, correcting herself, "that could not be, for none but a crazy woman would be out at this unreasonable hour."

She opened the door, and meeting her son as he was about to rush upstairs to his bedroom, she arrested him, saying, "Patsey dear, what kept you out to this hour of the night? I thought some accident happened, agra; come into the kitchen, where there is a good fire, till you tell me what made you stop out so late. Don't you want some supper, or breakfast it must be called now, for it is near day?"

"No, mother, I am not hungry. As regards my staying out so late, the cause may be too long to tell you now. Suffice to say, that there was a prize question to be solved in school, for fifty dollars, and I won it. There is the money for you, mother," he said, handing her the fifty-dollar bill. "This is what I call a profitable way of learning, by which we cannot only get education, but make money."

"Ah, my son, you may call that money a profit, but I call it a *loss*, for by your staying out so late you caused me a loss of peace and rest; your father and I lost your company; you lost your regular old habits of saying your prayers at my knee, and God and His Holy Mother grant you have not suffered the loss of your innocence, as you have of your good, pious habits, and we of our peace of mind, by your late irregular conduct."

“Well, mother, one cannot be a child always. If I want to be anything, I must do like others.”

“Yes, I allow, you must be like other people. But what people? The holy saints and servants of God, like St. Patrick, St. Aloysius, or St. John, or the people of the wicked world, without faith, morals or hope? Now sit down and tell me, your loving mother,” she said, taking his right hand into her own, and putting her left hand around his neck—“tell me all now, my son; what kept you out to this hour? Surely, you were not in the academy till midnight? What were you doing; where did you get your supper and this drink I smell from you; and who is it that drove you up to the gate there in the cutter? Out of this you shan’t go, my own poor boy,” she added, in tears, “till you tell me all. Begin your confession now, to your poor broken-hearted mother, and I will forgive you everything, if you tell me all.”

“Why, mother,” he answered, a little embarrassed, “you ask me so many questions that it will take till nine o’clock to-morrow to answer them all. Besides, I can’t speak a word when I see you cry so,” he added, bursting into tears himself! “hoo, hoo, hoo—oh, it kills me to see my mother all the time weeping; why are you not like any other mothers, who let their sons do as they wish; but always warning, always predicting, always in tears? oh, I can’t stand this, mother!” he sobbed, hiding his face in his handkerchief.

"My son," replied the good woman, "it is because I love you that I am all the time uneasy about you. I saw so many, perhaps not so good as you, but as competent in their own strength, fall or go astray, that I cannot be indifferent to your slightest actions. I know you are a good, obedient child, and it is for this reason that I ask you to tell me what has kept you out so late. You know your father is not able to be around, and there is none to attend to everything but that boy David, our hired servant."

"I know all this. But Doctor Blackman told me to-day that father would be well in eight or ten days, and that there was no danger of his life."

"I know he says so, but doctors are not infallible. Now tell me where you spent this blessed night."

"Well, mother, after I gained that prize and got that money, the principal invited me, with others, to a 'sociable,' and at that I spent the greater part of the night."

"What did you call it? 'sociable,' what?"

"Why" he answered, "did you never get invited to a sociable party at a friend's house?"

"Oh, of course," she replied; "the principal must be very kind to you indeed, but you ought to have declined the invitation,—you had a good excuse. You could tell him your father was confined to his bed from an accident, and then, if he had any gentlemanly 'brought up,' he would excuse

you. Now tell me, who, besides you and the principal, were there?"

"That would be hard for me to tell, who am comparatively a stranger. The whole town, I believe, were there."

"Were not all the preachers there, and had they not some pious singing and prayers?"

"Yes, the ministers were all there, I believe, and they sung some hymns, and offered some prayers. But sure that did me no harm."

"No, ay? Were there no other Catholics there but you?"

"I don't know; but there was a young man named Reardon, who made himself remarkable by his jokes and comic anecdotes."

"What brought him there, I wonder? I know his father well, a good Catholic, who I am surprised allows too much of his own ways to that wild young fellow."

"Well, I suppose he came for fun, nothing more."

"Fun, ay? What fun could he have among those holy hypocrites, who pretend to be scandalized at the most innocent amusements—such as music on Sundays, or a family country-dance at a wedding?"

"Fun! I guess there was fun—an ocean of it at that sociable last night. There were 'forfeits,' 'hide and seek,' and other games too numerous to mention."

"You did not join those naughty, silly games, I hope?"

"No, not much; indeed I was too much occupied in thinking of my prize-money, and how easily it was earned. You can buy a shawl, and dress and furs, for that money, mother. I intended it for you, and said it should be yours, if I won it, even before I won it."

"You are my darling and best-beloved son, Patrick; I fear, if anything, that I have loved you too much. Now tell me who it is that was kind enough to drive you home in that nice sleigh with its silver bells, and I shall allow you to go to your room."

"Mother, that was the principal of the academy who kindly volunteered to bring me home," he answered in a hesitating and embarrassed manner.

"That principal, the good gentleman, must be very kind to you, my son. Why do you smile? Do you mock at your mother, Pat? for every time that I speak of the gentlemanly principal of your academy, you laugh. Why is it?"

"Why, mother, I can't help it. You speak so often of our *gentlemanly* principal, when I thought you knew that our principal was a lady, Miss Spoones."

"Oh, that's it. I should think her husband would be fitter for the office of president of a college than a woman. But perhaps she, the good

woman, has got a divorce from her man and *runs* the institution alone, eh?"

"No, mother, she is a young lady, very accomplished and talented. They elected her principal of the academy from the fact that she is a tip-top scholar, and that her late father, a captain in the navy, was head of the academy before he died. I tell you they are wealthy, this Spoones family. If you were to see the silver dishes and golden spoons, and watches, and elegant pictures that adorn that cottage of Miss Spoones you would be really surprised, as I have been. I never saw such a sight before in all my life."

"And sure, my son, it was not that lady, the accomplished Miss Spoones, who drove you home in the sleigh to-night. It could not be at all possible that such a *rich, accomplished* and *refined* lady could take that trouble for you, a comparative stranger, when she could get one of her servants to drive you home. Who, then, was it who drove you up to the gate this night? it looked like a female who returned you such a warm good-night and embrace after you had fixed the buffalo-robcs so nicely around the person! Tell me who that was, and this will be my last question to-night, my son."

The young man hesitated, knowing well the effect that telling the truth would have on his mother, and said: "You saw the sleigh and the person in it, did you not, mother; the moon was

"Yes, my dear, I saw, and judged it was a female that was in the sleigh, though I could not swear to it, my eyes are so dim of late, from weeping."

"Well, mother, you saw aright, for that—that person—lady was Miss Spoones herself, who is an experienced driver, and has a fine span of black colts, four year old, and an elegant cutter, and rich robes, too."

"Oh, Pat! Pat!" she exclaimed. "Oh, has it come to this, that my poor innocent boy has become so corrupted, so lost to self-respect, so dead to all the lessons of virtue he received in the nineteen years of his life, as to be out in the dead of night, to spend so many hours of darkness in the company of a strange, if not a loose, female?"

"Mother, be calm. She is a most respectable young lady."

"Silence, my son! and go to bed. Don't talk any more! 'Respectable young lady,' eh? Why, no lady, young or old, that ever had any self-respect or fear of God or man, would be out of her room at such an hour. Oh, what are we coming to? Oh, it would break your father's heart, he would never survive the disgrace, if he knew of your conduct this night, young man."

"Oh, mother dear, for God's sake, do not tell father. I will be good. I meant no harm. I will never be out late again. Oh dear! oh dear! It will kill me to see you carry on so, mother. I go

on my knees and promise you. Mother, do not turn off from me, but hear me. I promise I shall never be out late again. Do forgive me, this time. I shall obey you in all things if you just be calm, and forgive me this one fault."

"Oh, I forgive you, my child, and may God forgive you. Kneel down there, under that picture of the Immaculate Mother of God, and say three 'Hail Marys,' for her aid to keep and preserve you from the contagion of sin and the snares of Satan. 'Holy Mary, conceived without sin, pray for him. Amen.' Good-night, my child, and God bless, protect, and save you."

The young man ascended to his room with a slow, heavy step, opened the door, and casting himself prostrate on the floor, which he wet with his tears, he went through his prayers, adding to his usual exercises, which he repeated from memory, the fourth Penitential Psalm, the 'Miserere,' in penance for the sins of the past day. Then rising, and divesting himself of his clothes, and sprinkling himself with "holy water," he flung himself into bed, where for hours he remained awake, ruminating on the exciting incidents that had lately occurred. At length, about the hour of five in the morning, his disturbed mind yielded to the languor of his weary members, and sleep succeeded to consciousness.

But even in the oblivion of a heavy sleep his imagination was not at rest, and the repose of a peaceful slumber was wanting. He dreamed that

he was mounted on a high platform surrounded by an applauding crowd who encouraged him to go forward, while a few obscure but grave peasant-like females warned him of the danger of an advance. He hesitated which to follow—the plaudits of the multitude, or the warnings of the grave matrons, who were despised and repulsed by the noisy crowd; when a dashing female advanced, mounted on a splendid vehicle, and invited him so pressingly to join her that he could not resist, but with one spring leaped forward and took his seat by her side. The crowd redoubled their applause, while the warnings of the plain women became more indistinct, till, rushing on at lightning speed, all were left behind and out of sight. Presently a terrible precipice appeared in front, but the fiery steeds rushed forward to destruction; in vain he called on his female guide to pull the reins, to try to check them in their mad career, till at last, growing desperate, he stood up, leaped from the car, and was landed at the very brink of the precipice, broken and bruised, while the fiery chargers and female conductor disappeared forever in the seething gulf beneath! He awoke, and found himself on the floor, somewhat seriously damaged in his face from having fallen out of bed against the stove in his room. Having bathed his face with cold water, applied by means of a sponge, the young man returned again to bed, where, musing on the events of the past day, his refreshed fancy recalled

the pleasures he experienced at the sociable, the honor conferred by his obtaining the prize-money, and the possible higher degrees that awaited him on some future competition for literary honors.

“It is all gammon,” he said to himself, “to be alarmed as my mother is, about any dangers, to any one of common sense, from mixing up with people of different views of religion or frequenting female society. That may do very well in Ireland, where people were oppressed by English laws and a premium was offered for apostasy; but here we make the laws ourselves, and the people do not seem to care for any religion, though they talk a good deal about churches. Not even Miss Spoones, who is, say who may anything to the contrary, an elegant lady. She never spoke a word to me against any religion. The only religion she seems to like is to love, ha! ha! ha! My mother is foolish, and I was a fool to tell her all I did last night. I must be wiser the next time. What an ass I was, and to cry like a little girl. Shame! shame! I sincerely hope I will never be so foolish again. What is it to a man if he lacks society, honor, fame and love, as Elder Bull said the other night at the ‘sociable?’ He spoke the truth too, every word, although he is a roaring Methodist preacher and all that. We all feel these truths within us, and even in our sleep our very dreams confirm these impressions. I promised mother, to be sure, last night not to remain out late at night;

but I did not promise her to give up the society I have already entered at Brighton. No, not a bit of it; tears, prayers, entreaties and remonstrances to the contrary, notwithstanding." And with these resolutions he got up and made his toilet, forgot his morning prayers, and went down to breakfast. A good resolution formed in the morning may keep a man from falling for a day, but a bad resolution, in its evil results, may last for a life, perhaps for all eternity!





CHAPTER XI.

ORACULAR LETTER FROM "THE SPIRITS" TO A METHODIST
PREACHER—DELPHIC AMBIGUITY.

WE alluded, in a preceding chapter, to the letter which enclosed the response of the spiritual medium to the anxious inquiries of Elder Redtop about his *inamorata*, Miss Spoones. He was interrupted in his hurry to learn the contents of this important epistle, the reader will remember, by the unexpected and unwelcome visit of the presiding elder, Bull, just as the latter was starting on his electioneering campaign, and he was not sure but the sharp eye of the old fellow, as he called him, noticing him hiding the spiritist's epistle, did not also guess at, if he did not read, its contents. Hence, before taking the important document from its hiding-place under the cushion of his office-chair, he took every prudent precaution against eavesdroppers and spies. He not only locked his door and turned the patent catch or spring to make it secure, but he stuck a plug of

paper in the key-hole, and hung up his light summer coat over the window that looked towards the street. Then, with bated breath and beating heart, he took the letter, drew the small piece of paper enclosed from the envelope, and read the following words, which formed the entire contents of the document:

“Your intended shall be yours for life,
Though she be another’s wife.”

“What on earth does this mean?” he said in soliloquy. “She shall be mine for life, though another’s wife? How can she be mine if she is another’s? This is a puzzle, really. There must be some mistake here,” he said, turning the other side of the small single sheet of note-paper. He took hold of the envelope again, looked into it, and having torn it, turned it inside out. Then he lifted up the cushion from his office-chair, looked under the chair, in fact looked all over, to see if some scrap of paper had not dropped out of the cover, to explain, throw light on, or solve the mystery. “But, no, this piece of ‘*consarned*’ note-paper,” he said, “was all this scurvy little envelope contained.” He read the words again and again, but their Delphic ambiguity remained all the same, reminding one of the old oracle of Delphos, “*Ibis redibis non in bello peribis.*”

He tried to transpose the words of the note, so as to make them read differently, not that the poor man had any knowledge of the Latin line here quo-

ted, which was all "Greek" to Redtop, but he had often heard that prophecies and predictions were uttered in mysterious and puzzling sentences.

He flung the document towards the stove, uttered a not very pious prayer against all the mediums and fortune-tellers in the world, and sank into his office-chair, to think what he should do next. Would he go back to the medium and demand the fee he paid her, or some plainer intimation of what was to be his destiny regarding his intended partner for life? "For," he said, in an emphatic voice as if speaking to others, "a wife is the best gift of the Lord to man, and, if I am defeated, if I am to draw a blank or inferior prize in this great gift enterprise, I am a lost man. What is all this world to a man without a good wife?" Then he thought it would not do to go back to the premises of the medium again. What if he were observed going or coming from those accursed haunts of the spirits of darkness? Then if he visited the medium again, ten to one she would demand another fee, and, perhaps, tell his fortune in language as puzzling as the one already delivered to him. No, he would not go back to the medium; he knew where there was a colored man in St. Paul, who never failed in telling the fortunes of those who sought his advice, and that, plainly, *viva voce*, without writing, mystery or humbug. To him he would go when he had time, but, at present, he made up his mind to pay the medium back for her humbug pre-

diction and riddle on next Sabbath, when "supplying" for Elder Bull. He would give it to them, those Spiritualists in general, and the branch of them in Brighton in particular, on next Sabbath, if the Lord spared him, now that he had a personal pique against them, in addition to the general recommendations to pitch into them, which the presiding elder communicated to him, Redtop, before going on his electioneering tour, to run as candidate for Senator. Then, when Elder Bull spoke to him, he did not feel like preaching against the Spiritualists, for he had had no dealings with them, and all his studied sermons were delivered against the Catholics. But, now, he would have a stimulant to goad him against the former, and he could easily make use of his sermons against the Catholics, by changing a few sentences and putting *Spiritualists* in place of *Catholics*, in his methodistical harangues.

"In the meantime," he continued in monologue, and taking up the rejected document again, "I will run over and visit my dearest Polly, and lay this specimen of medium fortune-telling before her, to see what she will say to it, or recommend me to do." So saying he took the piece of paper, gathered up the fragments of the torn envelope, and placing them in his slim portmonnaie, thrust the latter into his breast coat-pocket. Then going before his glass, he brushed his hair, arranged his seedy necktie, turned up his heavy brass-plated

finger-ring, so that its broad shield would be noticeable on the back of his finger, the "digitus annularis," and having locked the door of his apartment, he started at his usual rapid gait for the cottage of Miss Spoones. He knew he would find her at home, for the hour was late, and there was no sociable that he heard of in the town that evening.

Hence, when he rushed into the hall, instead of asking, as was his wont, "Is Miss Spoones in?" he said to the girl who admitted him, "Go tell Miss Polly that I am here, and want to see her on urgent business."

"What's the matter? you look excited," interrogated Miss Spoones, as she entered. "I thought you would be studying your sermon for Sabbath this time."

"You did, eh? It appears you have no trouble, while I am crossed and persecuted by all the world, and all through your fault, Polly, my dearest, oh dear me, oh! oh!"

"Through my fault?" she answered indignantly. "Why, Redtop, I told you the other day you were half crazed. In fun I spoke then, but it appears I am not wrong. Why do you weep so? None but a weak-minded, silly thing would be so easily made to shed tears."

"I know it. I think I am crazy, 'pon my soul I do, or if not, I will be shortly. But have I not reason? Here, take that document and read it.

Perhaps it may not puzzle you, as it has me. For the past three hours I tried to find its meaning," he said, handing her the epistle containing the foreknowledge of his fortune.

She took it, looked at the address on the torn envelope, which read thus: "Communication from the Spirits to Elder Redtop," and smiled, to the disgust of his weeping reverence. Then opening the little folded scrap of paper, the words already given met her gaze, while suddenly her eyes flashed with indignation. "Don't you pay no attention to this, Redtop. Some person has been humbugging you, that's all. No true medium ever gave out such a riddle as this. Are you sure it was the medium herself, and not Mrs. Broadher, that made up this ridiculous oracle?"

"It was the medium herself, the veiled woman, that wrote the note, enclosed it in this envelope, superscribed it, and handed it out to me through the little window, from her own inner room to the sitting-room, where she and I had the consultation, and where I paid her the fee of one dollar before she would speak a word."

"Well, well, she must be a humbug or worse, that medium. Leave this letter with me, and I will see about it, Redtop."

"Well, I suppose she is a humbug, sure enough, but then you recommended me to consult her, telling me I might rely upon her knowledge. I do not like, Polly dear, to leave you this letter, though

I could not refuse you anything, dearest. But I intend to take that letter to the famous colored fortune-teller in St. Paul, who lives in a lone shanty on the borders of 'Frogtown.' He goes by the name of Bill Shim. And mind, he won't deceive me by no writings or riddles. I went to consult him once when paying my addresses to Lizzie Sweet, who died of consumption, and he told me exact that she wasn't a-going to be my wife, but would die unmarried, and so she did."

"But, you leave this note in my possession till next Monday, and I shall probably have the true interpretation of it for you. Perhaps the medium left out some little word or particle, that would alter the meaning of the whole; then it would read thus:

"Your intended shall be yours for life,
And not be another's wife.'"

"Oh, that would be happiness to me, if it read that way, my dearest Polly. If you say it ought to be so, I will believe you, and then I will, in my sermon next Sabbath, while Elder Bull is electioneering to try to get nomination for senator—I will give that medium who deceived me, and those Spiritualists, h—ll—I mean, of course, 'Hail Columbia.' I will, dearest."

"Oh, do not, Redtop. Do not abuse the medium or the Spiritualists. They are getting to be very influential in these parts. It would not be wise to offend such a large body, and it would not

do at all to 'pitch into the medium' in Mrs. Broadher's house, for there are people from her house always in the Methodist church, to take notes and learn what the preachers say. Perhaps that very medium you consulted may be listening to you now; and indeed—for she is a very strong-minded woman—she may contradict you in church. She may speak up to you and tell the entire congregation that you were consulting her the other day. That, you know, would not answer,—would ruin your prospects as a minister of the gospel, and lead to many evils."

"Well, Polly dearest, I thought as you do myself, at first; but Elder Bull, before going on his electioneering tour, told me I must pitch into the Spiritualists on account that they were taking away many of our best people—such as Messrs. McBeth, Jones, Carver and others. So I have no choice, if I don't want to displease the presiding elder."

"Then if such are your instructions you must follow them; but on no account are you to reflect on the medium. I know her, and I know she can't be touched with impunity. Be very cautious."

"I will take your advice, dearest. My own inclination and resolve was to preach against the Catholics, for all my sermons have been composed with that view; but the elder insisted that, till he comes back, my sermons must be against the Spiritualists."

“All right brother and dear friend, I shall return you this letter next week, when I hope I will be able to explain all to your satisfaction.”

The couple parted for the present—the ‘lady’ to her work of embroidering a pair of elegant pocket-handkerchiefs, which were not intended for her beau Redtop, and the latter to his study to prepare his phillippics against the Spirit-rappers.

The Sabbath, as they call it, arrived and found elder Redtop ready, after a week of nervous anxiety, for there was a large congregation attracted by the rumor that the discourse was to be against the Spiritualists, and also because many were desirous of hearing the “Elder” preach by himself, in such a large church. Heretofore the bashful young preacher had frequently held forth, but always in school-houses, court-houses, and academy-halls, or dining-rooms at taverns. Never until this auspicious day did he have a chance to show off in a respectable large meeting-house. Hence he was very nervous. He felt as if a fire was in his bowels, which burned him inwardly, and the fumes of which, mounting up with his ambition, filled his brain and confused his ideas.

He had altered his best sermon against the Catholics, so as to apply it to the Spiritists, but in declaiming the discourse before the looking-glass in his room, in his drawling and unnatural accents, he every now and then fell into the mistake of putting in “Romanists” in place of “Spiritualists.”

He found habit a second nature, and as he had been so long in the habit of abusing and slandering Catholics, he found it difficult to break himself into the practice of abusing any other people. This day was to be the crowning day of his life. If he succeeded on this day in pleasing the large congregation which he was to address, it was more than probable—nay, it was certain—he would be called to the pastoral charge of the church in case Rev. Elder Bull got elected to the Senate, and there was little doubt of that, from the fact that he had preached often over all parts of the electoral district, which he was gone now “to stump” as a politician. Some people of course were curious enough to make the impertinent remark that if Elder Bull had a call from the Lord to preach the gospel, he was not justified in renouncing that call and accepting the call of a political “caucus,” and the same people said, if he had not a call as a minister, then he was an impostor to pretend that he had a divine call. In either case they made out Elder Bull a pretender. But no matter what he was, “that’s none of my business,” thought Red-top. “If I can get this congregation that’s all I want. Then I am sure of my darling girl Polly, and then I may laugh at the puzzling riddles of mediums. All I see depends on my preaching to-day. So here goes,” he said, mounting the pulpit.

He took his text from the first book of Samuel or Kings, chap. 28, where it mentioned that Saul

“hath rooted out the magicians and soothsayers from the land.”

In the commencement of his harangue he was comparatively calm, though very nervous, as appeared from the frequent mistakes he made, often ludicrously mentioning Catholics in place of Spiritualists, and idolatry in the place of demonology and withcraft. But when, after giving a general idea of Spiritualists, he spoke of the presence of that devilish sect in this Christian village, his rage became uncontrolled, he frothed at the mouth, invoked the vengeance of heaven or the wrath of hell on them and their followers, friends and patronizers, denounced them as impious, deceitful, immoral, and worthy the execration of mankind. He was interrupted in the midst of his furious declamation, however, by the voice of a woman, crying out, “You are the deceiver, the liar and the impostor, Elder Redtop, because, on last Tuesday, you went to consult the medium at Mrs. Broadher’s! You paid your dollar fee, and you received the information you asked from the spirits! And now you have the hypocrisy to denounce, curse, and condemn those who only imitate yourself, you vile, ungrateful wretch, in going where they can learn the truth instead of the disgusting humbug and hypocrisy which you and such scoundrels as you retail to your deluded hearers in places like this!”

Cries of “Put her out, put her out,” greeted the

veiled medium's speech. But she left of her own accord, brandishing a silver-mounted revolver, and after she left, many of the people left too, disgusted at the exhibition that Redtop made of himself, and some with a view to have the medium arrested. The people were confused, and did not know what to think. Some threw the whole blame on the preacher, some on the Spiritualists and the medium. But there was one thing which all were agreed on, and that was this, namely, that Elder Redtop *was not* a fit person, under any circumstances, to be the pastor of this the best congregation in the town of Brighton, even if he were recommended by Elder Bull himself, after he got elected to the post of Senator. His bread was baked anyhow, so far as promotion to the charge of the presiding elder's congregation was concerned. So thought all wise people, and especially Miss Polly Spoones, the wisest of all the Methodists in the town of Brighton.





CHAPTER XII.

INTERESTING COMMENTS ON PASSING EVENTS BY HONEST
LAYMEN.

WERE you at meeting yesterday, Mr. Broadhead?" said Mr. McBeth to the proprietor of the first-class hotel in the town of Brighton.

"No, but my wife and daughter were; and sorry I am that they went to such a place to witness the scene that transpired."

"What was that?" inquired Mr. Smylie, a travelling man for a wholesale house in St. Paul. "There was some fun; I heard only a sketch of it. Your preacher got into a fracas with a medium of spirits, did he not?"

"So I could hear. But that Redtop ain't nobody, anyhow. He has not sense enough to keep him from eating dirt, that fellow. Elder Bull is greatly to blame for allowing such a crazy fellow to occupy his pulpit in his absence. It appears he intended to preach on Spiritualism,

but instead of showing how unscriptural or unorthodox the system was, he got into a rage, and began to denounce all belonging to that profession, and among others all in this town who followed that way of thinking; whereupon the medium, who stops down at Mrs. Broadher's, a very respectable woman in her way, rose up in meeting and contradicted and denounced the preacher in turn. Oh, it was a rich scene, they say."

"Yes," added McBeth, "and besides this rebuke to him in public, she declared that the self-same man, Redtop, a few days before, called at her room, at Mrs. Broadher's, to get his fortune told."

"Oh! oh! ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed Mr. Smith. "That is going a little too far. I allow that Redtop has not much common-sense, but sure he would not be so mad as to put himself in the medium's power, in the manner in which you state; or if he did go to consult her, he surely should not denounce her, and all who went to consult her, as he did."

"But I tell you, Smith—I tell you all, gentlemen—that I can prove to you that every word the medium said in meeting is true. You must know that, before she gives audience to anybody who wishes to consult her, the name of the person applying for consultation must be sent in to her on a card or piece of paper, either written or printed. Now, I have seen the medium this very forenoon, and she gave me that card; there it is, gentlemen,

look at it, with his name written by his own hand? Now, is he not a scoundrel, every inch of him, eh?"

"By-the-by, you are a spiritualist, McBeth, are you not?" asked Mr. Smith.

"No, sir, I am not. In fact I am nothing. Those hypocrites have made me lose whatever religion I had when I came here from the East. Their double-dealing, their perpetual abuse of the Catholics, the only sincere religious people there is; their frequent misconduct, I mean of the clergy, such as Horace Cook, J. W. Cook, Huston of Baltimore, not to speak of the peccadilloes of others nearer home—all these things have disgusted me with the whole tribe of gossellers, so that I never go to hear any of them except I want fun."

"The fact is, McBeth," said Smith, "all these men have to be watched. I confess my own faith has been very much staggered of late by what I have seen and heard. But we must not be discouraged on that account."

"It is really discouraging to observe the conduct, not to speak of the contradictions, of most of our Evangelical ministers," said Mr. Broadhead. "Look at the very best, I may say, of them, Elder Bull. He goes off last week, leaving this fool Red-top in his place; and what does he go off for? Why to try to get nominated for the office of senator, hoping to make that office—like Harlan, of Iowa, or

Creamer, the brother-in-law of the President—a stepping-stone to higher promotion, not in the Church, mind, which he vowed to serve, but in the State, where, like the rest of the office holders, he may fill his pockets by the plunder of the people's money. Is this what we ought to expect from a 'man of God,' as he shamelessly calls himself."

"I tell you what, gentlemen," said Mr. Smylie, "there is very little of what belongs to God about those men. As for me, I have been disgusted with them years ago, and hence, though born and brought up a Methodist, I have not gone to their churches for years. If I want to hear a good practical sermon, recommending temperance, chastity, or any other Christian virtue, or denunciatory of vice in all its forms, I go the Cathedral of our city to hear the bishop or one of his clergy, though I am not a Catholic. In fact, I may say, to use an Irish bull, 'I am neither fish, flesh nor good red herring,' in religion."

"Like me exactly," answered Mr. McBeth. "I am nothing. But yet, these lying roarers won't let me alone and give me peace. And now, as they cannot but see that I am disgusted with their rant, and scandalized at their enormous religious slanders, because I went once or twice to a meeting of so-called Spiritualists, they denounce me as one of them."

"I thought this great new medium here at Broadher s was a Russian, who got the 'famous

pebble from the Emperor of China,'” said Broadhead. “How is it, McBeth, for you must know that she spoke such good English yesterday in reply to Redtop’s denouncements in meeting?”

“I suppose the spirits know all languages,” replied McBeth, with a smile in his roguish eye. “Would it not be,” he continued, “as easy for the spirits to teach all tongues as to lead her into the knowledge of all future events, as for instance, whether Redtop’s intended lady love is to marry him or not, for that was what took him, in disguise, to consult her.”

“Was that really so?” asked many together.

“Yes, gentlemen, that is really so. He got jealous of some rival of his in the affections of his intended, and very good right he has to be jealous, as far as I can learn, and that is what took him to consult the ‘Russian Star-reader with the pebble from the Emperor of China.’ The truth is gentlemen,” he added seriously, “this medium business consists in great part of humbuggery too, as well as Methodism and its camp-meeting and the noisy roaring of the preachers declaring they ‘see the Lord;’ they ‘hear the angelic songs above;’ and they ‘can conduct the sinner straight to Paradise.’ There is just as much imposition in Spiritism, and its followers are as much deluded by its pretended light communicated though ‘rappings,’ ‘table turnings,’ and ‘mediums,’ as those labor under who believe in the pretensions of Methodism and Mor-

monism and all the other 'isms' which exist, and they are almost countless. The motives and objects which delude and lead astray are different, but the delusion and discomfiture of the victims of all these errors of the human mind are the same substantially."

"By-the-by, did you say that Redtop was jealous of some rival?" McBeth asked Mr. Smith. "Is it possible that the slippery school-marm is going to give him the mitten, eh?"

"Yes, Smith, she has other game in her eye besides that half-daft preacher, but, like a prudent housekeeper, she does not like to throw out the dirty water till she has the clean to replace it. She will hold the dominie till she can be sure of the new-comer; for she is no fool, I can tell you, that Spoones damsel."

"Who on earth can she be after now, Mac?" interrupted Broadhead. "I have known that girl to wind young men—aye, a dozen of them—around her as she would a ribbon around her waist, and then get rid of them all with as little ceremony as if they were so many flies that perched on her skirts. So she has got a new string to her bow now?"

"Yes, she has set her cap for one of the students, a young smart Irish lad: he that lately carried off the prize on the problem in algebra."

"You are right, his name is Ronay, I believe."

"She calls him Ronay, but his true name is

Mulroony, I believe. My boys tell me she is all attention to him in school; divides her lunch with him, gives him apples and candy, whispers and chats with him apart from the rest, keeps him after hours in the hall to teach him the true *accent*, ha! ha! ha! Then at the sociables and at parties they are always together, and she drives him home at night. This is why Redtop is almost beside himself with jealousy. Good reason he has too, for he is no more than a monkey beside this young Irishman."

"Why, you astonish me, Mac. How in the world do you get posted on all these interesting social affairs?" asked Mr. Smith.

"Don't you know, Smith," replied Broadhead, "that Mac is a spiritualist. Why there's nothing a secret to *him*. You and me and others, who do not belong to this 'progressive' philosophical sect of spirit-rappers, are behind the age. We don't know nothing, man alive. Ha! ha! ha! Mac not only knows all the courtships, scandals, and divorces in the county, but most likely, from his intimacy with the spirits and woman's rights, he knows all that passes in the hearts, minds, and dreams of all the interesting young ladies in the county. Ha! ha! ha! haw!"

"No I don't," answered McBeth; "but I keep my ears and eyes open, and do not allow myself to be hoodwinked and humbugged at camp-meetings, 'distracted' meetings, and other roaring exer-

cises, which I am sorry to see you, Broadhead, attending, when I know that you and I entertain the same sentiments regarding these disgusting exhibitions."

"Upon my word, McBeth, I like your candor," remarked Smylie. "But you ought to have been a preacher. You seem to understand these things well. I should think you would start an anti-sectarian church; and if you did, I am sure you would have a large congregation to attend to your preaching. I would join your congregation, sure."

"No, sir, I have no such ambition; besides, I believe that none but God can found a church. Our Lord founded a church, and whatever church that is, you may depend on it, that alone is anti-sectarian. For sectarianism is the upas tree which has ruined and blighted all the fair fruit of the garden which the great second Adam planted and watered by his blood. They say the olden Paradise is still in existence, for the Bible does not record its destruction, and that is, at least, a negative proof of its existence. So also, the second, but far fairer Paradise which Christ planted is in the world, still exists, but hidden from many, very many."

"By George!" said Broadhead, "Mac, you speak just as the Roman Catholics do. You must be a papist in your religious belief, though not in practice."

"I am not, I assure you, a Catholic, and besides

have had little or no relation with Catholics in a religious point of view. I have a sincere respect, however, for the religious practices of the Catholics. I find very few of them who deny or sacrifice their faith for any temporary advantage, as most of all other people do without scruple. Is it not strange that though our *holy* Methodist preachers are always dinning into our ears that the church of Rome is aiming at political power, yet we never see or hear of a Catholic priest giving up his congregation or religious duties, however severe, and running for office, like Elder Bull, and people of his calibre. Now, in several parts of the States—in New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, not to speak of California, Louisiana, etc.—Catholic priests could, if they wished, get elected to Congress and State Legislature. Yet they prefer the work of their Divine Master. But who can count the number of Methodist and other preachers of Protestantism who run into office with greater haste than they do in walking in the way of eternal life. They are very slow in going up the narrow way, and yet they are always telling their dupes that they, themselves, are the true followers of Christ, and that the Catholics are aiming at political power. Can there be a more striking proof of the blindness of their hearers?"

"Oh, Mac," answered Broadhead, "I see the reason that you are pointed out as a dangerous man. If men were to believe as you do, and rea-

son in your manner, our camp-meetings and protracted meetings, by George, would soon be deserted, and all our preachers would have to run for office, like Elder Bull, or else they would have to become *honest* tillers of the soil, for when the hat would go around to help the *holy cause* there would not be many dimes found in its bottom, I guess. I advise you, Mac, to be on your guard for the future, for if the ministers hear that these are your sentiments, instead of putting you down as a spiritualist, as they have done, I am glad to learn erroneously, they will denounce you as a Jesuit in disguise, and then not all the water in the St. Croix will be able to wash you clean from the odious charge. Beware, McBeth, beware, I advise you. In the meantime, take and smoke that cigar "

"Thank you for the cigar, if not for your advice," answered McBeth.





CHAPTER XIII.

A RATHER PREMATURE DENOUEMENT OF A WELL-PLANNED SCHEME.

A FEW days after the serio-comic exhibition of Elder Redtop and the famous Russian medium in Elder Bull's meeting-house, she was visited at her chambers at Mrs. Broadher's by a young lady and gentleman. The young lady, who was no other than Miss Spoones, appeared to be familiar with the haunts of the medium, for she ascended to her rooms without rapping or other intimation of her approach, and after having arrived at the sitting-room, where she left her male companion, she intruded, if intrusion it was, into the secret shrine of the gifted woman. Her companion did not apparently relish this his first adventure to the enchanted precincts of the spirits, and fearing every second that he would hear or see some frightful manifestations of the dreaded agents of a mysterious power, he kept himself very quiet and breathed in a suppressed and troubled manner. He wished

he had never entered this condemned-looking mansion, and he was strangely tempted to quit the detested place, and would have done so if he had not feared that his gallantry and politeness would be thereby compromised by thus abruptly deserting the lady he came with; so that there was a struggle in his mind between his candor and abhorrence of all sorts of humbuggery, and his good-breeding and politeness to the ladies. And we are sorry to have to record that the latter feelings of weakness toward the sex prevailed with young Mulroony, for it was he; and though thoroughly disgusted, and in a profuse perspiration from a sense of his humiliating position, yet he remained a silent but troubled expectant of the return of his companion from the inner haunts of what he regarded as an accursed impostor. "Oh dear! oh, dear me!" he exclaimed, in an undertone, audible to himself, "I wish I was out of this horrid place. Catch me here again, once I quit it. What a fool I am. It looks as if the 'spirits' or the devil would haunt such a rookery as this. But then it would not do to insult the young lady who asked me to come here with her, and who is so kind and good to me. No, no, no; I must have patience and take it cool, as she often tells me." In the meantime, during the anxious hour and more that the young man had waited in the sitting-room, into which a little girl of cropped hair and a very large nose, dressed in bloomer costume, used now

and again to peep at him through the half-closed door, there was an earnest and almost angry dialogue going on in the dark inner room between our academy principal and the medium.

"See this note you gave Redtop," spoke Miss Spoones. "Was not that a nice answer to give the poor half-crazed fellow when he came to consult you? I thought you had more sense.

"Your intended shall be yours for life,
Though she shall be another's wife."

"What sort of a riddle is this?"

"Well," answered the medium, "was not this as good an answer as I could give him under the circumstances? He could not understand it. Did you not tell me to give him a doubtful answer?"

"I did, certainly. But then, there is no doubt here. You told him I should be another's wife, and that sets him crazier still than he ever was."

"No doubt I did. But had I not your own words that you had made up your mind to marry the young student, whatever would become of Redtop and his engagements?"

"Yes; but I told you this piece of my mind in confidence. Don't you know that if this was generally known I would lose the academy?—a thing that Jake Squires, the vice-president under me, is so anxious for; and besides, Redtop, if he suspected this, would bring matters to a crisis, and worse than all, if young Ronay got the slightest hint that I was engaged to Redtop, he would never

again walk another step with me. You see, now, how imprudent you were in giving him, Redtop, such a puzzling answer. Now you must pretend to amend it by inserting 'not' before the words 'another's wife,' and that may calm him."

"Yes, I can do that, but then he won't receive it now after the scene in meeting last Sabbath."

"Yes he will; leave that to me. By-the-by, you did a very foolish thing last Sabbath. You should not have gone to hear Redtop, and as you did go, you should have kept mum, not said a word. The hearers didn't know it was you that was present, you were so veiled and disguised, and there was no apology for you to brandish that pistol,—that was madness."

"I beg to differ with you, Polly dear. If I had not brandished the pistol, the trustees who were around me would have succeeded in arresting me, and then it would have been all over with me—as a medium, anyhow. The shooting-irons scared the cowardly trustees."

"No doubt of it. But then, I fear for you yet. It is not all over about that scrape in meeting. They are talking of having you arrested for disturbing public worship, and if they should do so, of course your lucrative career as a medium would be at an end. Let's see; how much have you saved now during the three years you have been telling fortunes in this place?"

"I am not three years, nor fully two years, in this house."

"I know you are not over two years domiciled here with Mrs. Broadher, but you know you used to come here in disguise, three days a week, before your final taking up of your residence in this house. You must have made one hundred dollars a week anyhow, so at that rate you must now be worth from ten to twelve thousand dollars."

"Oh, how you do exaggerate, Polly. No, I am not worth five thousand dollars, only about four thousand. You forgot I have to give one-third of all I make to the lady of the house."

"Well, with four thousand dollars you can live very well, even if they do break up your business. But that depends altogether on Elder Bull, when he returns home after election. If he tells Redtop to follow you up and arrest you, nothing can save you; but it little matters to you, as your fortune is made anyhow."

"Oh Polly dearest, if ever you exerted yourself on my behalf, let it be now. Go and see Bull when he returns and persuade him by all means to overlook the affair in the meeting-house. I wish to hold on here a little longer till I have made the five thousand dollars, and then I do not care what happens. I will then go East and publish or sell those sketches which I privately took of all the male and female fools who consulted me, and then can't I live in spite of them all."

"I wish it may be so, for your and my sake, for it is beginning to be suspected that I have some

share in your gains; I defend you and advocate your cause at all our sociables. They are beginning to think that it is not for nothing that I so often defend the 'celebrated Russian medium,' Madame Tetoffskoff, ha! ha! ha! as some call you, while with others you are Mrs. Richards, widow of old Richards who was killed in the circus."

"Nor is it either. For when all this is over, as over I mean it shall be in one year more, I shall make you a present of a set of diamond jewelry, the like of which won't be in this State. But you make sure and keep that old hypocrite Bull from butting me, for he is a perfect savage when his temper is up."

"I know what he is and what they all are, but whatever can be done I will do for you, depend on that. But let old Bull do his worst, you can make a fortune in spite all he can do. There are many ways of killing dogs, as the saying is, besides choking them with butter. Did you hear of the 'escaped nun,' as she calls herself, 'Miss Polly Audry,' who is going around all the great cities and making a rapid fortune by her lectures?"

"No, I have not heard much of her on account of being obliged to keep so close here for the last two years, fearing detection. Tell me all about the 'escaped nun.'"

"Oh, it would take me too long if I told you all. She declares she escaped from a nunnery, though, if the truth was told, it is how she was

expelled by the nuns. But what matter, as she makes money and draws crowded houses. She delivers three lectures—one for married people, men and women, one for ladies only, and one for young men. In each of the lectures she relates a different lot of stories about priests and nuns and sisters.”

“Oh, what a splendid chance to make money. I wish I was an escaped nun instead of a medium. She must be real clever, that one.”

“No, not very. But she has a clever man, a Baptist minister, who has married her to manage her business and write her lectures. When she quit the nunnery, and announced herself a lecturer against the sisters, a number of clever ministers, as many as twenty-five of them, proposed to marry her, for they saw there was a fortune in her; but they were all too late except this Baptist, a Red Elder Choker. Pity poor Redtop was not smart; this would be a good chance for him to improve his finances.”

“Well then, as she married this Elder Choker, why does she not take his name as Mrs. Choker, instead of her maiden name, Miss Polly Audry?”

“Oh that would never do. She would draw no houses as Mrs. Elder Choker. It is in the maiden name, Polly Audry, that the magic lies. This is what draws the crowds. The young men and young ladies, as well as the married, want to hear all the scandals she relates about her former life in

the nunnery. You never heard such yarns as she tells—funnier than any novel ever written.”

“Did you hear her?”

“Oh yes, three times; once last summer, down East, during vacation, and again in Chicago on my way back, on two different nights. I would not have missed her for anything. I will tell you what she said some other time. But now, as it is growing dark, give me that letter and the magic likeness of my future husband.”

“There they are, take them, and may you prosper in your new conquest.”

“Good-bye, dearest,” she said, departing.

When Miss Spoones came out to where young Mulroony was impatiently awaiting her, she made signs to him to be still and beckoned him to her side.

“I have, dear friend,” she said, “a great secret to tell you, or rather to show you—a gift from the spirits, which, if you promise to guard faithfully, I will communicate to you.”

“Oh,” he answered, “of course I shall keep it secret if it will not compromise me in my obligations to my fellow-men and my conscience.”

“Oh, not at all. It regards me. This medium has done me many a favor. After my papa’s death she procured me a long interview with his spirit, so that I am now sure where he is, and that he is happy.”

“Indeed,” incredulously replied the young man.

"I should not rely much on these spiritual manifestations, unless after the most incontestable evidence of their presence and veracity."

"Oh, I had the clearest evidence of both. In fact I saw papa as clear as I see you now, and he told me what nobody else on earth knew but himself. And now I have asked her again for the revelation of what is to me the next important event in my existence, and she has procured me this 'spiritual mirror,' in which I can always see the most beloved object to me in the world, namely, my future partner. There is the mirror," she said, showing him a square block of some varnished material, like a book, "but no person can see anything but myself."

The young Irishman looked at it, and no sooner did he do so than he saw his own likeness on the cover. He looked up to Miss Spoones rather alarmed, but when he returned his astonished gaze to the toy, nothing appeared but the polished cover.

"What's the matter?" she said, noticing his confusion.

"Oh, nothing; I thought I saw some figure on that block cover."

"Oh, no; that could not be. It is only to me that any appearance will be visible on the back of this 'spiritual gift,'" and with that she thrust it into her pocket.

After this little episode in the arts of spiritism,

the pair quickly left the haunted mansion of Mrs. Broadher and they separated, the lady in the flush of the consciousness of the success of her schemes, as she surmised, to get a husband; while the student, half ashamed, self-condemned and puzzled, plodded his way heavily and slowly towards the shelter of his honest, quiet, paternal roof, with doubt in his mind, dulness in his imagination and disgust in his heart. Was it imagination or the devil that made him see his likeness on the magic toy? He could not tell.

After the departure of Miss Spoones, the medium felt in high spirits at the prospects there was of her business continuing in a flourishing condition for a year or two, at least, to come, for she felt confident that while she had such an influential advocate in the outward world as the principal of the academy, there was very little danger that Redtop, or any of his sort, could hurt her business much. She, therefore, after indulging in a fit of very hearty laughter at the success of her policy, burst out into such ejaculations as, "haw! haw! haw! I am an able dealer sure; who can beat me?" She then turned to her large, well-secured trunk, unlocked it, and taking out a portfolio, she counted out her money, bills, bonds and specie. After two hours of tedious counting and recounting of all she had, she found it amounted to \$4,700.

"A pretty nice sum," she said, speaking in a low whisper, "to have made in less than three

years at telling fortunes. Poor fools," she added, in the same cautious whisper, "had they known where and how the Russian medium got her startling knowledge they would burn the house over her head."

As she was gloating over the neatly adjusted piles of notes, bills and specie, the hundreds, fifties, twenties, tens, and fives, placed in separate layers, and the gold and silver and cartridges, there was a sudden knock at the door, and the voice heard saying: "Open, open quick, dear! Hurry, or you are undone!"

She opened the cover of the trunk, and swept the whole load of money, piled on the cover of it, into its bottom. Then she opened the door. It was Miss Spoones who was there.

"Oh, you must be off, right away," said she. "They have a warrant out for you. They will arrest, expose, and seize on all your money as got by imposition!"

"Oh, don't you say so. How is it, or do you wish to frighten me?" replied the medium.

"No such thing. Elder Bull is returned, almost sure of his election, the old brute; and he insists that you must be arrested. He says you are a devil, or a she-Jesuit, and that you must be driven out of the town, or all the people will be seduced by your lying wonders."

"Why did you not go to see the old cuss, and prevail on him for your sake, to let me be this time?"

"I did, but he would not listen to me. He is now stiff, expecting he will be elected, and, besides, he is against me for taking young Ronay's part when he nearly killed his son 'Sike,' as they call him. You must be off immediately, for the constables will be here forthwith."

"Oh, where will I go? Can't you hide me, dear cousin?"

"No, no. They would find you out in our house. There is a poor, but genteel, Irish family one mile east of here; go there. Their names are Bryson. Tell them I sent you. Their daughter comes to the academy; or I will go with you myself."

"Oh, what shall I do? My money is all scattered in the trunk. What shall I do with it?"

"Gather it up and take it in your satchel. There, there, have you it all in? Now be off," she said, after helping her to pack the money into a small satchel.

She was off in quick march, and she had need to be, for scarcely had she crossed the garden and passed into the little bridle-path through the grove, on her way to Bryson's, when two constables were knocking at her door for admittance. But she was gone, and safe at the Irish laborer's humble home. They did not know that she was the medium, or who she was, but took her in, for she was accompanied by the principal of the academy, Miss Spoones, who asked, as a favor, that she would be

received, and promised that she, Miss Spoones, would pay for any charge that should be made for the trouble of accommodating this lady.

"Oh, wisha, not a charge," said Mrs. Bryson, "shall be made, if the lady can put up with our humble place, ma'am, if she is to stay for a month, or three of them. She can occupy little Biddy's room."

"Thank you, Mrs. Bryson," said Miss Spoones; "where is *Bidilia*, Madam Bryson; I did not see her for over a week at the academy?"

"You mean Biddy, Miss. Oh, she goes up to the Irish Corners now, every day, to prepare for the Bishop, who is going to give Confirmation there next month."

"Oh, indeed! I am sorry she has to neglect her classes, as this will put her back very much."

"Oh, no matther, Miss, how she goes in her learnin', if she goes right wid her soul. Shure, as the priest says, what is the whole world to us, God help us, if we lose our souls?"

"Well, good-bye, cousin; keep very still, till I come to see you again," said our clever young academician, departing.

There was uproar in the town again. The medium had gone off, after defying the preacher and humbugging the people. Mrs. Broadher was arrested, and examined at court, but nothing could be got out of her in reference to who or where the medium was. When asked was she (the medium) well patronized, she answered:

"Yes, I have been well patronized. You all know this as well as me. For there is hardly one, young or old, man or woman, boy or girl, preacher or pickpocket, minister or man-catcher, but consulted her, time and again. Sign is on it," she added; "she has made her fortune out of ye! She is worth ten thousand in gold!"

"In gold, do you swear?" said the Squire. "How do you know? Did you see it in gold, aye?"

"Yes, I guess I did see it, and handled it too, often."

"That was terrible, that such an impostor should take so much money away with her to Russia, out of this impoverished country," remarked the Squire, who, though dull as he was on ordinary occasions, was sure to be all attention when *gold* was spoken of. The sound of the gold aroused his honor. The investigation was about to be adjourned *sine die*, as there was no account of the medium, when the parish priest, Father John, was seen riding into town, after having called into Bryson's house, to hear the confession of the old man, who was a centenarian. While waiting on the old man, he noticed a stranger in the kitchen, and asking Mrs. Bryson who that was, she stated, "she did not know; that she had been introduced last night, by Miss Spoones."

"Ha! ha!" he said, "I think I have seen that one before. She looks very much like the famous

Miss Skinner that disappeared from these parts some three years ago or so."

"O yes, I hope not, your reverence," said Mrs. Bryson. "If that was the case, I would not keep her a minute in the house."

"Don't disturb her," said the priest, departing. "That would not be hospitable. Say not a word to her about that event—keep silent."

As soon as Father John left, after having discharged his duty to the dying man, a travelling Jewish peddler, who had been exhibiting his wares in Mrs. Bryson's, picked up his parcels and departed also. Whether he overheard the conversation between the priest and Mrs. Bryson, or had his suspicions aroused from some other cause, it appeared that he conjectured rightly concerning the absconding medium. Hence, hoping to get a reward for his information, he repaired to the court-room where the investigation was being held, and communicated his suspicions to Squire Drows. That official immediately issued his warrant, and sent two constables to make the arrest of the 'lady' at Mrs. Bryson's.

One hour's time was all that was needed to clear up these suspicions, and in little short of that time the constables, Thomas Grabbit and Philip Holt, entered the court-room with the celebrated Russian medium, called Mrs. Teloffskoff, Mrs. Richards, and other aliases, who was no other than the lost Miss Lizzie Skinner, in custody. The

spectators as well as "the court," bless the mark ! were thunderstruck. At first the most intense curiosity manifested itself, and all wanted to have a look at the one returned, as it were, from the grave. Some nodded to the long-lost old maid ; others addressed her and welcomed her, and some went so far as to shake hands with and embrace her. Finally the public feeling was manifested in applause loud, vehement, and so continuous that the squire dismissed the charge against her, and she returned in triumph with her friends to her home.

"After all," they said, "she was a smart woman, Lizzy was. She disappeared of her own accord, made lots of money, and now returned to her friends independent. It was a g—r—e—a—t consolation," the people said, "that if she did make lots of money it did not go to Russia or any foreign country, but remained at home for the good of the community, and to encourage trade." This action of Miss Skinner's proved her to be a woman of genius, and notwithstanding that she was despised by the ministers, and it was their fault that she was discovered before she desired it, and rather disadvantageously, there was little fear, it was allowed on all hands, but she could get a good husband with her five or ten thousand dollars in gold. Who would dare to talk of fraud, hypocrisy or imposition against anybody, and especially a lady, with ten thousand dollars in

gold? Ay, or even half that, as Elder Fribbler remarked, was enough to make any woman respectable, even if she was not respectable already, as Miss Skinner certainly was, it was allowed on all hands.

"But what about the false information that went abroad about her abduction, and the lying telegrams that were dispatched, and the meetings held, and the newspaper articles written, and the other injuries done to a respectable class of the people, namely, the Roman Catholic population of the country?" asked Mr. McBeth of this shallow-headed preacher.

"Oh, as for that, it can't now be mended," answered the preacher. "Anyhow, those Romanists deserved what was said against them, and much more. We can't say too much against the Catholics, and if Miss Skinner is safe and well to-day, no thanks to them. If what was said did not turn out exactly true, it was very like what might have happened if 'the Lord' had not saved her." In other words, "*Si non e vero e ben trovato*," as the Italian proverb has it. If what sectarians say of the church is not true, their preachers will make it pass for truth among their deluded followers. And this is Methodist morality!



CHAPTER XIV.

" Quis talia fando : Temperet a lacrymis ? "—VIRGIL.

" Who can relate such woes without a tear ? "

DAVID, David, hurry downstairs—make haste, wake up Aunt Sally ! Quick, quick, lose no time ! Oh Lord ! I fear father and mother are dead. My God, my God, have mercy on their souls ! ”

Such were the exclamations of young Patrick Mulroony one morning as he arose about daylight, after a night spent very restlessly. He hastened downstairs, having fancied that he heard a noise as of some person falling heavily, and when he entered the chamber in which his father was confined for over two weeks, he found his mother on the floor, apparently lifeless, but still breathing heavily ; but, on approaching his father’s bedside, perceived that he was in the cold rigor of death, pale and breathless. He fell on his knees, burst into a fit of the most heartrending sorrow, and cried aloud .

“O father, father, why did you depart unknown to me, now your only son! Oh, why did you not give me your blessing before leaving me forever? Oh, oh, I can’t live, I must not live, after my good, best of fathers. Oh, let me die, let me quit this now detested life, since my father has left me. Oh, mother dear,” he added, perceiving that she had returned to consciousness under the good treatment of Aunt Sally, “why did you not tell me that father was dying? Why did you not call me, that I might get his last blessing, and crave his dying pardon for all my offences against him? Oh mother, mother, you should have called me when you saw danger!”

“Oh, holy Virgin, comfort me,” answered the good mother; “oh, my poor, sad child, sure I had no notion that he was dying, till I saw the damp of death on his brow, and then I fell back senseless myself, and do not know how long I remained in that condition. Did you send for the priest and the doctor, to see if they can tell us what caused him to die so suddenly? Oh, woe, woe, my poor husband, my good husband!”

“Yes, mother, I sent David to summon them, but what use is it now when my noble father is cold and stiff in death. Oh, my dear good father, my dear father!”

This scene continued for two hours at least, till the priest, Father John, arrived, who, without waiting for Doctor Blackman, who arrived an hour

after, made an examination of the corpse, and found that death was caused by hemorrhage from one of the tibial arteries. Mr. Mulroony, as the reader will remember, was severely frost-bitten in his lower extremities, on his return home after an evening spent drinking of the poisonous beverage of Mrs. Mastiff. The surgeon from the village of Brighton attended him, and from want of experience in bandaging the affected limbs, caused them to swell to an enormous size, so that the lint, sinking into the swollen flesh, acted as a foreign body, causing the inflammation to become a very aggravated character, till finally, gangrene setting in, soon made short work of the muscles, and invading a leading artery, the man died in fifteen minutes, without pain or consciousness, for he was under the influence of opiates. His loving wife, thinking that he had a comfortable sleep, did not mind to disturb him while he remained quiet. It was only when she went over to his bedside to offer him his drink of beef-tea, about daybreak, that she found him dead. She fell back to the floor unconscious from the shock, and it was her fall that aroused her son Patrick from his disturbed slumbers.

When the self-styled "surgeon" arrived, after looking at the dead man's face and placing his coarse mechanic hand over the heart of deceased, he would fain persuade the spectators that death was caused either by poison from some improper food, or heart disease, for he said that "he was

doing excellent well when I visited him yesterday ; that he certainly could not have died from the injuries to his frozen limbs, that was sure."

"Are you a surgeon?" interrupted the priest, Father John.

"Yes, I profess to be," replied the quack.

"Well then, I am sorry your profession and practice do not agree. For if you profess surgery and practice quackery, you are no better than an impostor!"

"That is pretty severe language for a clergyman, I think," replied the doctor.

"Yes," said the priest, "it may be severe, but you can't say it is not true. Truth, you ought to know, is sometimes bitter or unpalatable. Did you ever hear tell of a man dying of hemorrhage?"

"Yes, of course ; I often saw persons die of that complaint."

"Complaint, do you call it? Now," added the priest, "can you tell me why that complication is called 'hemorrhage,' and not '*demorrhage*,' or '*pemorrhage*.'"

"I suppose because that is the proper name for the disease."

"No, you can't tell me, not a bit of it. I see you are not an educated man, how then could you be a safe surgeon? Look there," said Father John, lifting the clothes from the bed ; "see that pool of blood. That's what killed your patient, and in my opinion you ought to be held responsible for his

death! Be off now, from this house of sorrow, caused by your ignorance, and let me never again, I warn you, see your face in this settlement, or I will have you prosecuted for malpractice in this and other cases in which you have grossly blundered!"

The chopfallen surgeon went off, not, however, without demanding his fees for attending on the sick man, whom he relieved of all bodily pain, sure enough, by his grossly ignorant prescriptions. The whole community at Brighton became highly incensed against Father John, on account of the summary manner in which he cut off his (Blackman's) practice among the people of his settlement.

The next time he visited the village he was told that all the preachers commented on his encounter with the surgeon, Dr. Blackman, on the preceding "Sabbath" evening discourse, taking occasion to disclaim against the tyranny of the Catholic Church which, the preachers said, if it had the power, would not only abolish the *pleasing variety* that existed, in the different denominations of Christians, but also compel men to practice medicine by diploma, by refusing to recognize any but the regular professors, graduates of colleges. Now, every man who had genius, and *thought himself* qualified, could practice medicine, and this offered a chance to many men to make a comfortable living, who otherwise would have to labor for a living.

"What's this you've done to our surgeon, the ex-shoemaker, the other day, up at the Irish settlement?" said Mr. Broadhead to Father John.

“Nothing at all,” answered the priest, “except to tell him to give up doctoring, and go back to the *surgery of old shoes* again, or else learn something of his business. ’Tis too bad that such men are allowed to trifle with the lives of the people, as they do.”

“Well, the people here think it’s all for the good of trade, and that every man has a right to make a living the best way he can.”

“That would be well enough, if, in making his living, he did not cut short the living and the lives of his fellow-men. Is it not too bad that, while a man has to learn his trade to be employed as a shoemaker, a tailor, or a blacksmith, the only men who serve no apprenticeship, who need to learn nothing, are those who profess to practice two of the learned professions, namely, doctors and preachers. Where the learning is needed, it seems, there it is sadly wanting.”

“That is so, assuredly. But you see the people are their own best judges in the matter, and if they risk themselves to be killed by such surgeons, it’s their own loss.”

“True enough; but yet, if a man is mad enough to do away with himself, the laws do not allow him. He is put in a place of safety. So, also, the law ought to interfere in the case of men who take upon themselves to practice a profession, the good or evil use of which cannot but seriously affect the health and life of the people. He is a

man who knows no more about surgery than I do about 'spirit-rapping,' and yet he undertakes the charge of cases of sickness or injury, which demand all the knowledge of the most experienced and learned practitioners. Is this right? Am I to blame because I warn my people against the ignorance or rashness of that man? Surely the people are wrong here, if they think as you say they do."

"The people here think you have no right to interfere. This man, they say, has a family to support, and if he was generally regarded as you regard him, he would starve."

"No, he would not starve. Have we not poor-houses? And even if he should starve, or have to return again to his old trade of mending shoes, is not that better than that he should fill a couple of graveyards in his efforts to try to support his own family?"

"That's true enough. Yet the people think it's all for the good of trade. There is the undertaker and coffin-maker, who make money fast from the practice of such men as Blackman. They do not care, of course, how many die, or what kills them, provided they get the job to rig them out for the grave. And our preachers here take the same view of the matter.

"I am sorry they do. But when we recollect they themselves are in the spiritual, as they call it, the *Christian* commonwealth of life, what the quack surgeons are in the physical life of the community,

namely, unauthorized, uneducated religious quacks, we need not be surprised that they make common cause with the former. 'Birds of a feather flock together.' "

" There is some truth in what you say. Do you recollect the case of Miss Skinner, some short while ago? They were all ready to burn that medium, who imposed on them so long and so lucratively, but when they found out that she had the cash, and was one of their own sort, then all was changed—all their former hatred was turned into admiration. Now she has dozens of suitors, all trying to get her hand and her money. Queer world we live in."

" I know all this, and I lament it. 'Tis melancholy to think that money will stand in the place of everything. Let a man have neither virtue, religion, nor worth, if he has but money he is all right. 'Tis too bad it should be so; but we all see it is so," said the priest emphatically.

" Was this Blackman the only surgeon who attended Mr. Mulroony during his late illness?"

" Yes; he was the only surgeon, as he calls himself. There was no other nearer than some twenty miles, and when he came, he made so light of the case that it was not regarded as dangerous. When inflammation set in, however, the patient's limbs became tumid, and owing to bad bandaging, which was too tightly bound over the limbs, gangrene set in, ate through the artery, and he died

from hemorrhage—loss of blood. Blackman would persuade them the man was poisoned, till I showed him the blood.”

“I am very sorry. That Mulroony appeared to be a fine man, of high honor and sound principles. He was universally respected.”

“Oh, there was no honester man than poor Michael. He was, besides, a religious man, and though his death was sudden and unexpected, it was by no means unprepared for. I visited him two days before he died, as I did, indeed, regularly twice a week since his accident, and I must say that I was very much edified by his conduct and sentiments. He had all his temporal affairs arranged, too, and though his wife and family will miss him, death to him, I am confident, was only the beginning of a never-ending happiness.”

“Indeed, I have no doubt. He was a good Christian, if ever there was one. He is generally regretted by all our citizens, and will have, I am sure, a very large funeral. When will he be buried?”

“Next Monday, at ten o’clock in the forenoon, when a solemn *Requiem* will be offered for his soul in our Church. By-the-by, I must be off, to have suitable arrangements made to accommodate the crowds which I know will fill the church on the melancholy occasion. So I wish you good-day.”

“Good-day, Father John, and thank you for your visit. Call when you come to town next.”

“I shall do so. Farewell.”

The funeral took place punctually at the Catholic church, which was draped in mourning for the occasion. There were several clergymen from distant parts present at the invitation of the pastor and at the expense of the widow of the deceased. The entire adult population of a great part of the country was present to do honor to the memory of the dead. There were no less than two hundred and fifty vehicles of all descriptions in the funeral cortege. And the chanting of the service was grave and solemn, if not very artistic. Father John himself, the parish priest, preached the sermon, which was a learned explanation of the Catholic faith regarding the middle state of souls, rather than a panegyric of the deceased. He proved the grounds of the Catholic doctrine on this point, from reason, tradition, history, scripture and the unvarying practice of the leading Christians and Jewish churches. He showed that if each man is to be rewarded according to his works, then there must be gradation in the punishments and rewards, as there are grades of guilt and merit in human actions. This he proved from the legislation of all nations and peoples. In the very dawn of creation and the twilight of sacred history, patriarchs, saints and prophets spoke of a *lower* and *lowest Hell*, and prayed to be delivered the horrors of those penal dungeons. Pious Pagans themselves retained in mutilated form the knowledge of this oldest point of Revelation, while the modern

and ancient Jews have been unvarying in the preservation of this original doctrine of primitive Revelation.

So great was the confidence of the ancient people of God, in the efficacy of prayers and sacrifices for the dead, that Josephus, the historian, mentions that many Jewish families ruined themselves in property, in order to discharge what their faith required to be done for the dead, for they believed "it was a holy and wholesome thought to pray" for them. Who can count the churches, chapels, monasteries, hospitals, and other charitable institutions, that owe their origin to this belief during sixteen hundred years of the flourishing existence of the Christian Church? As easy, and easier would it be to count the stars in the heavens, as count the religious foundations which this faith gave birth to. On the other hand, he said, what could be more unmeaning and useless, if not extravagant and silly, than all the pomp and ceremony over the grave, if all goes to honor the body without doing any good to the soul, the immortal and divine part of man?

The sermon finished, then the services over the body were performed according to Rubrics, and then the coffin was removed to its final resting-place, in the pure peaceful grave. The grave was blessed, the coffin lowered down, and what remained of poor, honest Michael Mulroony was thus committed to its final resting-place, amid the

prayers of the church, the sympathetic sorrow of his neighbors, and the moving heartrending grief of his widow, his children, and his relations. "*Requiescat in pace. Amen.*"





CHAPTER XV.

THE BAD SEED BEGINS TO GERMINATE.

IN the occasion of his father's death, and during the period of a week or ten days after, young Patrick Mulroony indulged in paroxysms of the most excessive grief. He abstained from all manner of food for three whole days, and he wept until the tears ceased to flow, and the source of them, in the lachrymal glands, became dried up. He would receive no comfort, listen to no advice or remonstrance from mother, sisters or brothers, till at length, fearing that there was danger of his health, if not of his life, the neighbors were called in, and forcing his room door, in which he locked himself in, they compelled him to take some nourishment, and change his apparel. There is a blessing pronounced on those "who mourn," and a grief which brings comfort and life to the soul; but this species of sorrow must be accompanied with resignation to the Divine will, and have its origin in humility

and charity. But there is also a species of sorrow which brings death to the soul, because, growing out of pride, it is unaccompanied by any supernatural motives, and leads to despair and final impenitence. We will not say whether or not it was this mundane, inordinate grief that took possession of our young friend, but certain it is, that its effects were in marked contrast with the subdued and deep, but calm sorrow that was manifested by the other members of the family. They shed tears in torrents, and uttered accents of the most bitter grief, but while doing so, their eyes were raised to heaven, fervent prayers ascended from their contrite hearts, and they fasted and imposed austerities on themselves, on behalf of the beloved one who had left them. His sorrow was solitary, sour, repulsive and violent; theirs was heartfelt, calm, devout and amiable. In a word, his grief was of the earth, earthly, while that of the rest of the family was sacred, sincere, self-denying, and supernatural. The young man vented his sorrow in his loud sobs and vehement actions as he rambled around the farm and visited the scenes which his father frequented and admired while in life; while his mother and the rest of the family who came from the East to pay the last honors to their father, drove every morning to the church, to assist at the holy sacrifice offered for his soul, and read the Litanies at night, in common, with the same intention.

It was noticed by his mother that, for some cause or other, Patrick was generally absent from the family circle on these occasions. He was either in town, and returned not till after night prayers, or busy around the farm when the rest were ready to start for the church, or overslept himself, or there was some other excuse of visits paid by, or made to him, but during the whole time that his brothers and sisters remained, he never spent an hour in their company, either at devotion or in social chat. It seemed strange to Michael and Hugh, but they said nothing, attributing his strange conduct to the excessive sadness that took possession of him since the late sad event. If he was most of the time absent from the homestead, and his hours became more irregular, these circumstances were attributed to the increasing cares which devolved on the young man now since he became the inheritor of his father's estate, and had to transact all the affairs thereunto belonging. He had to prepare for the Spring work on the farm, to employ agricultural workmen, to have agricultural implements in order, and to purchase the teams which he considered were needed for an enlarged area of cultivation on the farm. His mother remarked that many persons, strangers to her, had been paying him visits, but taking them to be travelling insurance agents, agricultural implement sellers, tree-hucksters, patent bee-hive or churn vendors, or some of the other countless agents who

manage to lead an idle, easy life, at the expense of the farmers, she paid no attention to them, nor did she interrogate her son about them.

One day, however, after the departure of one of those nice perfumed '*gentlemen*' visitors, the old lady picked up a sort of handbill printed in small type, which she managed to read by the aid of her spectacles, but which shocked her delicacy very much after having read it, and which she cast at once into the stove. In the paper there was mention made of a "book of very nice pictures, so life-like and charming, and also containing 'mysterious secrets,' all of which any person could have in a *sealed envelope*, for one dollar!"

"Patrick," the old lady said, on the departure of the elegant *gentleman* mentioned above, "who is that chap, or what is his business with you, that you entertained him so long in your room? He looked like a Dublin dancing-master, tricked out in all his curls, flashy cravat, and counterfeit chains and rings?"

"Oh, that's an agent for an Eastern pictorial newspaper. He was showing me specimens of the illustrations; that's what caused the delay in my room."

"Indeed! What in the world would you want of such pictorial papers? You know they are not Catholic papers, and therefore we don't want them in the house. I have just burned a bill that that agent, as you call him, dropped in the hall, and

indeed if the paper is like the advertisement, I have no scruples in calling that fellow the Devil's agent; surely he's nothing else!"

"Oh, I guess mother you are mistaken; I saw no such advertisement as you mention. The paper may not be Catholic, indeed is nothing in a religious sense, but that is no reason why you should call it *devilish*, or the agent a tool of Satan."

"You do not want such papers: if you wish to be a scholar you must stick to your school books, and give up reading the newspapers, and, above all, such silly, scandalous papers as the pictorial journals—'Frank Leslie's,' 'Harper's,' 'Police Gazette,' 'Day's Doings,' and all such trash. Those papers are not fit for ordinary modest people to handle."

"Mother, you are too severe in your criticisms on those artistic journals, which have a very wide circulation, and which a man that has any pretensions to polite learning must read."

"But I say he must *not* read them, even if they were all unexceptionable, which none of them are, till he has finished his studies, and mastered all his scientific studies thoroughly. This is what we were taught in the old country, at least."

"The old country, mother, you know, is old and antiquated in its notions. This is a new country, and new ideas prevail in all things. By-the by," he added, looking out towards the road, "here is Professor Hoskey, coming to deliver those horses I bought from him to work on the farm."

“Did you purchase a team of horses from him? I don’t really like that man’s presence in this house. I don’t think there’s luck or grace anywhere he is. I am sorry you had any dealing with him. I wish you would shun his company. We have not had much luck since we made his acquaintance.”

“Why, mother, would you have me to be uncharitable and rude? The Professor has never done me any harm that I know of, and he professes to be my friend on all occasions.”

“I tell you I don’t like his ways, nor did the man that is in the grave,—God rest his soul,—like a bone in that fellow’s body. I don’t wish you to be either rude or uncharitable, God forbid; but I would wish you to be frequenting the company of none but those whose characters are above suspicion.”

“Let us drop talking, mother, or he will hear us. He is just coming in.”

“Good-day, good-day, ladies, and my gentleman friend. How do you do, madam? How is every inch of you, my bosom friend?” asked the Professor, and without waiting for a reply, he continued rapidly, “I see ye are both well. You look comely, madam, and my friend, your noble son, seems to be surperlatively happy, to borrow a grammatical term, ha! ha! I have studied that science so completely that it runs into my ordinary conversation.”

“Pretty well,” answered the matron, while her son’s answer was only a warm shake of the hand and a laugh.

“Well, my noble friend,” added the Professor, “I have brought you your team, the noblest span in the keounty. Upon my honor and veracity, I refused fifty dollars more for them than I sell them to you for. Indeed I did; I did so, honestly. You know what they are my friend. You and I have often rode behind them on all sorts of roads, and in all sorts of weather. I need not praise them, nor shall I.”

“Yes, Mr. Hoskey, I am satisfied that they are sound anyhow,” answered young Mulroony. “Mother,” he said, addressing his parent, “you are my treasurer, will you please hand the Professor his money, five hundred dollars, for his horses?”

“My dear son,” she answered, “I am sorry that my store is out. My treasury is empty at present. All the ready money in the house was spent to meet the charges of your lamented father’s funeral. There’s not ten dollars in the house at present, in cash, at least in my possession.”

“Why, mother,” rejoined the young man in surprise, “I thought you had over one thousand dollars in the house on the day father died. Surely it did not take all that sum to defray the funeral charges?”

“It did, and more than that. I even borrowed three hundred dollars from your brother Michael,

before he left for the East, and all that is gone likewise."

"Mother, I cannot see for the life of me how you could spend so much money."

"But I *know* how I spent it, and if you insist on it, I will tell you how it was spent."

"I don't *insist* on your telling me. But it would be satisfactory if you would give an idea of how the money was spent, mother."

"Yes, I will do so, in hope that when your poor mother dies, you will spend a like sum for me. I paid one thousand dollars for Masses for the repose of your father's soul, and the balance I sent to the Orphan House in the city, to have the Sisters and Orphans' prayers for his eternal rest. That's where it went, and more would go if I had it."

"One thousand dollars for Masses, did you say? Why, is not this a little extravagant?"

"I should say it was indeed," interrupted the Professor, "I never heard of such—"

"Professor Hoskey," said Mrs. Mulroony, "I hope you will not interfere in this conversation between my son and me. I do not address myself to you, sir."

"Beg pardon, Madam; beg pardon; I did not mean to interrupt you; oh, no, not I, indeed!"

"Now, my son, so far from this being extravagant, if I had the money it is not one thousand Masses I would have offered for your poor

father's soul, but forty thousand, as Isabella did, the Lady of the Grand Duke Albert, Prince of the Netherlands, who died about a hundred years ago."

"Why, I do not think there is any necessity for that, especially since we are told the Pope can relieve all the souls in Purgatory. Why, then, does he not do it, at once?"

"So say I, too," again interrupted Hoskey; "I read in a book I have home, called the 'Portrait of Popery,' headed, that this 'Purgatory is only an invention of priests in the dark ages, to wring money out of the people.'"

"Oh, I would not go so far as that, Professor," said Patrick, by way of apology for the harsh and impious slander of Hoskey. "But I do not think it is necessary to lavish money in that way."

During most of the preceding dialogue his sister Anne, called in religion, Sister Blesilla, was present, but constrained by that modest reserve peculiar to religious ladies, never said a word, but listened to the dialogue between her mother and brother with a compassion which compelled her to weep in silence. But no sooner did the blasphemies of Hoskey, and the irreverent remarks of her brother grate on her refined ear, than her modest eye kindled with indignation, and she spoke as follows with flushed countenance:

"Oh, Pat, my dear brother, I am sorry to perceive that you are forgetting your Catechism and

that you have nearly lost all the good impressions made on you by the Christian Brothers, in old holy Ireland. Oh, I never thought I should hear you ridicule or listen to such blasphemies as your friend, the professor, has dared to utter against the most consoling and most ancient doctrines of our faith. We know it is a holy thought to pray for the dead, and that the greatest and holiest men in the world were distinguished for this devotion. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judas Maccabæus and Saint Augustine. And for one to dare ask, 'Why, if the Pope has power to relieve all the souls from a suffering state, he does not do so,' is just as absurd and impious as to accuse God, the Creator, of cruelty, because, though His majesty has the power to prevent all evil, yet he by His adorable providence also allows and wills suffering and afflictions among mankind. We are such insignificant worms in the sight of God, who is infinite above us in all perfections, that we cannot, without impiety, ask Him why he does so and so. All we want to know is the will of God, and try to perform it the best way we can. Oh, Pat dear, my best-beloved brother, I never thought I should hear you speak thus, or listen to those who would try to corrupt you by such wicked notions," she added, bursting into tears and quitting the room to hide her emotion and heartfelt sorrow.

"I am really sorry for this episode," said the professor. "Oh, 'tis too bad, too bad! I would

not for the *hull* team have made that accomplished lady get so excited. I did not mean anything. What I said, was said in half joke and half earnest. But I am now so accustomed to polite Yankee society, where a man may say anything he pleases, to cause a laugh, that I forgot I had religious persons near me. Too bad, too bad! Let us come out." And so saying, the worthy pair went out to inspect the horses.

After quitting the house, Hoskey resumed his conversation with Patrick, saying: "Why, my young friend, do you not come round the village as usual? You will be ruined, my son, if you continue listening to these religious lectures from your sister and mother! By George, they will make a monk or a priest of you, they will!"

"Oh, there is no danger; I don't pay much attention to what they say. I feel bad that I have not your money to hand you for this team. But I will send in wheat this week, and pay you."

"Don't speak of money; that will do in ten days hence. What I want is to free you from being kept under by those women folks. Why, man, they feel very bad in town when you are not among them. Miss Spoones is really distressed at not having seen you in ten days. We had a brilliant 'sociable' the other night at Elder Bull's, but all the ladies were asking for you, the charming Ronay. 'There ain't no pleasure when Ronay is absent,' as Miss Spoones said to me in a whisper.

Why do you smile? Is it on account of calling you Ronay? That's what all the nice young ladies call you. I told you often myself, you should drop the prefix 'Mul' and let Patrick slide too. 'P. M. Ronay,' let this be your signature."

"Certainly, all my mail matter, papers and letters, are addressed to me in that form. I suppose I will have to adopt the alteration. Even the tax-collector puts my name down in that altered style."

"Yes, of course; there is no use in the world in maintaining those outrageous outlandish names, without euphony or phonetic harmony. Oh! by George, I nearly forgot. Here is a new photograph of your friend, Miss Spoones. She appeared in that elegant dress at the Women's Rights Convention, last week, in Chicago. Does she not look charming? There was only one other lady as well dressed as your friend Polly, that was the celebrated Miss Tennie C. Claflin, sister of Victoria Woodhull, of New York."

"By-the-by, Miss Spoones does look splendid here," remarked Mulroony, gazing at the card.

"Oh! Ronay, my best friend, you are a lucky coon, so you are. I wish I stood in your shoes, man, in the esteem of this accomplished lady."

"Nonsense, man! She does not care a fig for me, Hoskey."

"No, I guess not, aye! We hear ducks, old fellow. What a humbug you are to talk so, as if I

did not know. I tell you all she is, and has, is yours this day if you only say the word.'

"Oh, you are only 'gassing' now, Hoskey. Let us drop the subject for the present, or that boy David will hear us."





CHAPTER XVI.

AN INSTANCE OF MODERN "PROGRESS."

"**H**h, dear me, what will become of me now, in my old age, and delicate state of health? The Lord look to me! Oh, my once dear husband! Elder, I thought you never would have treated me, your lawful wife, for twenty years, in this manner."

"My dear Carolina, you will suffer very little change in your relations with me. You need not be uneasy, you will be comfortable. I shall be as kind to you as ever."

"Oh yes, you will be kind to me, but you can't *love* me no more, how can you? Oh, I thought the conference would have never given their consent. Oh dear me, dear me."

"You need not fear, but that I shall love you as well as ever. You can have your own room, all sorts of attendance, and can ride out with our man Oleson, with my carriage and horse the same as you ever did. We will call you mother, still."

"Oh, do not tell me such childish tales. No, I shan't stay. I will go to the County-house first. I could not live a week as a servant or slave in this house, where I was so long mistress. I will go off, and speak to the Catholic priest to see if he won't send me to the Sisters of Charity. They say he is a good man. Oh, I wish I had been reared a Catholic, as my mother was, in old Lancashire, now I would not have to suffer all this disgrace, in my old age."

"My dear Carolina, it grieves me to hear you talk so. No, you shan't go to the Catholics. That would kill me, you know. I would rather see you die first."

"I guess you would like to see me die, or take my own life, any way to get rid of me. The Catholic religion never allows this cursed thing! I often heard my good mother say, and our boy Moore said the same, with them there is no power on earth that can separate man and wife. I guess they are the true Christians. I never believed in the stories our books and preachers told on the Catholics being idolators. No, no, no! never!"

"Carolina, my dear, you will *hurt my feelings*, very seriously, if you speak thus. You know the Catholics are wrong and practice idolatry, because they are not allowed to read the Bible."

"No, I guess not. They can't read it *backwards*, as Methodists and Protestants do, to find

out it sanctions divorce of man and wife, which the Lord never allowed."

"My dear, do not indulge in those unevangelical speeches. I would not for the world that my wife, who will be home to-night, should hear you. You can remain in this house and be your own mistress and have everything comfortable as if our relations to one another never ceased. I am sure, my dear wife, Elizabeth, will be as kind to you as to her own mother; my dear, you can wear her clothes, they will fit you. You shall have your medicine, your stomach bitters, your barks, your syrups and your gruel, you so much loved. Won't that be nice for you, my dear? You will have no care of the house, but enjoy all its comforts. Come, let us kiss now, and be good friends."

"No, elder, my lips shall never again be polluted by touching your perjured lips. I was your lawful wife, and now you get rid of me by a decision of your Pharisaic conference, to take in a woman of no great character, because she has money; that's all she has more than me."

"Oh, you do me great injustice, Carolina. I could weep for your blindness, only that it would be unmanly. That conference at Chicago, that gave me the decision, was not all composed of Methodists. The leading religious denominations were represented: The Baptists, the Universalists, First and Second Presbyterian Church, the Plymouth Church, and there was one Episcopal minis-

ter present, Rev. Dr. Canticler. They all came to the decision that we ought to separate, you and me, from your state of health, and our *incompatibility of dispositions*. Hence I did not do this thing rashly, but only yielded to a high tribunal. I have done all with a good conscience, indeed."

The preceding conversation explains itself, and took place between Elder Bull, now a senator and his wife Carolina, from whom he got divorced to make room for the successful Miss Lizzy Skinner and her thousand dollars, and between whom and himself there was no incompatibility of dispositions. The Elder became, since his election, a leading politician, and from the sweeping majority with which he was returned, attracted considerable attention among legislative rings and cliques, and as he had to spend most of his time at the capital, considered that he would cut a very odd figure there without a partner. Hence, he applied to a conference at Chicago of religious fanatics, who very complacently granted him a divorce, which he had very little trouble in getting confirmed in one of the State courts, after which, he immediately got married to the enterprising ex-medium, Lizzy Skinner. His poor wife saw herself thus in a short time reduced to the condition of a servant in her own house, being compelled by her feeble state of health to fall into the unnatural condition of a subordinate to the concubine of her brutal husband. People who come here from the old country, imagine that

one has to travel to the meridian of Constantinople, or Brigham Young's elysium in the wilderness of Utah, to hear of such occurrences as we treat of in this chapter. But they soon find out that such cases as this are far from being of unusual occurrence. We could point out half-a-dozen of such cases within an area of fifty miles. And this is called progress, that would be acceptable to all religious bodies, only if the obstinate Catholic Church was out of the way. Then there would be none to comment, condemn, reprobate or ridicule such cases as Elder Bull's pleasant exchange of an old, sickly, *incompatible* woman, for one that, though she was not pretty, yet could dress well, and had besides *five thousand dollars* in five-twenty gold bonds. It shows great folly and retrogressiveness in the old Catholic Church, with the old Pope of Rome at its head, to stand out so many centuries without change against such progress as we see practised by all Evangelical churches, and which Luther originated three hundred years ago.

"As we have improvement in agricultural implements, as reapers and mowing-machines, and in modes of travel, as steamboats and railroads, and in the tailor's art, as sewing-machines, so we ought to have improvement in religion also," said Elder Fribbler among a party of citizens who were assembled at the corner of Main street, in the town of Brighton, and spoke commenting on the conduct of Elder Bull.

"That stands to reason, sure enough," said Professor Hoskey, who, with his friend Mulroony, made a part of the crowd, together with McBeth, Broadhead, and a few others.

"Certainly," continued Elder Fribbler, encouraged by what the Professor spoke, "there is change and improvement in all things, why not in religion, I ask?"

"I allow a part of what you say is true, Elder," said McBeth; "we have evidence enough that there is change in what you call religion, for I believe it was Boussuet, a great French Bishop, who proved that there were over five hundred different creeds of Christianity, and since his day, about one hundred and twenty years ago, we have had about one hundred and fifty more changes in creeds. What I want to know is, if all these are right or not?"

"They may be all right, or at least the persons who believed those different creeds may think they were right, and as a man thinks, so he is," answered the Elder.

"That I can't come, Elder. If a man is wrong, *thinking* he is right will never *make* him right. You may think you are a learned and wise man, but you are not half so wise as Elder Bull, who has got elected Senator and got another wife as good as new, and five thousand dollars into the bargain, ha! ha! ha!"

"I do not think the other part of the Elder's

statement holds good either, namely, that as almost all things change and improve, religion is improved by change also," said the almost ubiquitous Mr. Smylie, the commercial traveller. "If all things change, why have we no change in the things that God made—the sun, the moon and stars. Now, there is no change I would better like than if we could have moonlight every night. Why don't your Beechers, in your conventions, who make new creeds, alter what God ordained, for instance, in reference to marriage. Why don't ye order the sun to shine for eighteen out of the twenty-four hours, and the moon to shine every night? This would be showing your power, and doing good."

"Why, what silly questions you ask, stranger," answered the Elder; "don't you know that those objects were created by God, and that no man can alter or improve what God has made or created?"

"Yes, I am aware of that. But is not religion the work of God's right hand, also; and what right has any man, or body of men, to annul, alter, or improve what God has created and perfected? What right had that conference of hypocrites, assembled two weeks ago in Chicago, to give license to your presiding elder, Bull, to dismiss his old wife, and take a fresh one to his arms? This is what I call a diabolical innovation on the Gospel of Christ, and an outrage against the moral order. In a word, it is infamous conduct all over."

"Are you sure they gave their consent to that scandalous proceeding?" asked McBeth.

"Why, sir, friend McBeth and gentlemen, I was present when, after a mock prayer to the Lord for light and counsel, the whole caboodle of them took their pens and signed a divorce, to enable the elder to get a second wife, as Luther and Melancthon signed the document permitting a sensual German prince to take in a second frau. I was present when the deed was done by that infamous conference."

"Gentlemen, there is no use in talking," said Mr. McBeth; "our Protestant churches are in a pitiable condition, and if a Reformation was ever needed, now is the time to begin the work. The conduct of this self-sanctified ex-elder is worthy the execration of every honest man. For years he imposed on the credulity of the people by pretending to be a holy religious man. Now he gets a political office, through the influence of an oath-bound secret society of religious hypocrites, whose creed is malice, and whose practice would be persecution, if they dared. Next, he repudiates his poor faithful wife, and joins himself to a notorious impostor, with a view of getting hold of her ill-gotten booty. If you can point out to me any individual outside or inside the penitentiary, whose conduct is more infamously criminal than that of *this man of God*, then I will confess I know nothing. Look at that young man there," he contin-

ued, pointing to where young Mulroony stood arm-in-arm with the "Professor." "That old wretch, Bull, laid cunningly-contrived plots to entrap that young man in the net of his hypocritical sect. Be on your guard, young man, you are not yet out of danger. Keep your eyes and ears open. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? No, nor can you learn truth, honesty, honor, nor virtue, not to speak of piety or religion, of that sect of which your countryman, Goldsmith, well wrote:

" 'When Methodist preachers come round
A-preaching that drinking is sinful,
I'll wager the rascals a pound,
They always preach best with a skinful.' "

"And this is the woman the elder has taken as a wife—the female whom they reported a couple of years ago was abducted?"

"Yes, sir, the same," answered McBeth. "It seems she was not abducted at all, but abducted herself, and then advertised herself as a celebrated medium. Knowing all the people and their affairs, who were foolish enough to visit her *den*, she could, of course, tell many circumstances regarding their lives and relations, and hence she passed as a famous fortune-teller. The whole country ran to consult her, and in a couple of years she amassed a considerable sum of money. She was at length detected through the penetration of the Catholic

priest, who lives up in the Irish settlement, when lo ! instead of being sent to the penitentiary, as she deserved, she is admired as a woman of genius, and among a great crowd of suitors who coveted her money, she is married by the presiding elder, after having divorced his own lawful but sickly wife, on the plea of incompatibility of dispositions."

"And this is the return he makes his constituents for electing him to the office of senator?"

"Yes, this is the way the holy man edifies the Christian community. This is modern progress."

"Oh, well, well, that is too bad. This is what I call progress with a vengeance. I do not know what they will do next, these religious men, and call it Christianity, Reformation, and Progress!"

"'Tis hard telling ; but you may be sure the end is not yet."





CHAPTER XVII.

FATHER JOHN AND AN INSTANCE OF HIS PASTORAL DUTIES.

FATHER John, the pastor or parish priest of the Irish Catholic congregation, near the village of Brighton, in Minnesota, was a man as remarkable for his good looks and elegant manners as he was universally allowed to be for his good nature and kind, charitable disposition. He was what "American ladies" called "a very pretty gentleman, too handsome for a Catholic priest," forgetting, no doubt, that God has the first and best claims to all living beings, and that all who are chosen to serve Him must be perfect and without blemish. Father John was a native of Ireland, and had received his preliminary education and virtuous training, as well as his birth, in the old borough of Cashel, under the hallowed shadow of the venerable ruins of King Cormac's sanctuary. Like many hundreds of his countrymen, he resigned his place in the Diocesan Seminary of Thurles, and his prospects of advancement in the ranks of the

clergy of his native diocese, through a zeal to *trim* the "holy lamp of God's sanctuary," and to keep it from being extinguished among the thousands of the exiled children of Saint Patrick, in the Old World.

Ireland was, for centuries, the school of the civilized world, but the storm came and desolated her colleges and universities, and her teachers perished in the ruins. But Ireland never ceased to be the most fertile nursery of missionaries and apostles. Even during the dark ages of her own literary famine, so to speak, her gifted children were in every nation engaged in the apostolic work of combating error or propagating the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In ancient times, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Caledonia, and Britain were the scenes of the triumphs and success of the apostolic labors of Irish missionaries. To-day, it is in the United States, Canadas, South America, the Australian continent and islands, as well as the East and West Indies, that we can find the Irish missionaries engaged in the same holy work as their fellow countrymen, during twelve hundred years and more.

What Saint Paul said to the Christians of his day, is literally true of Ireland, namely, as "poor but enriching many."

"*Quæ regio in terris?*" Where is the nation under the sun of heaven (aye, even where the sun

never shines the whole year around), where is one nation to be found that is not indebted to that little isle in the ocean for some "star" of Christian light, for some "gem" of Christian virtue? And yet, there is not one among them all grateful enough to acknowledge its indebtedness to the "Island of the Saints" for what they received. But ingratitude is the characteristic crime of these latter days—and we must restrain our indignant interrogatories for fear of losing the thread of our narrative.

Father John, though an Irishman by birth, was an American priest, having completed his ecclesiastical studies, and received ordination in a well-known seminary in Maryland. He was under the medium height, of very regular features, with the exception that he had a very prominent forehead, over dark eyebrows, and large gray eyes. To a casual observer, he would appear to be of a very refined and delicate constitution, but those who knew the fatigue and labors he could endure when obeying the calls of duty, were well aware that he was blessed with a system that could stand any hardship. He had all the vigor of a robust Irish frame, overlaid, as it were, by the studied and assumed delicacy of a native American gentleman.

He was a good classical scholar, a fluent and ready speaker, if not an accomplished orator. He had a sweet voice, either for song or sermon, and

an impressive action and delivery of discourse, and to these natural gifts were added the useful, but not very profound, accomplishments acquired in the hurried curriculum of one of our Catholic seminaries.

Such was Father John. We won't speak a word in praise of his piety, temperance, of which he was a leading advocate by example and advice, his humility, charity, and other virtues, for a man should not receive praise for these qualities till after death, and our friend, Father John, *still lives*.

It happened a few days after the events recorded in the two last chapters, that Father John was sitting in his study looking out on the mountainous drifts of snow that were formed in all directions from the action of a violent northwest wind that blew for twenty-four hours, about the last day in March. "It would be a bad job," he said to himself, "if a sick call came on this day, for it would be absolutely impossible to leave the house. I do not think I ever saw such drifts; they reach up over the windows of the Church."

Just then he thought he saw, through the mist that filled the atmosphere, something dark, struggling. He looked again, after adjusting a pair of spectacles to see distant objects, and sure enough there was a brave man with a yoke of oxen, struggling hard to break his way through the drifts. By slow degrees the animals ploughed their way through the snow, till at last coming in front of

the presbytery, Father John stuck out his head through the half-open door, and asked the man who guided the oxen, what he wanted, or what brought him out on such a day?

"A sick call, your reverence," was the reply.

"A sick call?" repeated the priest in astonishment. "Surely no man in his senses would make up his mind to die on such a day as this."

"He is in his senses then, your reverence, thank God; and he must see you before he dies."

"Who is he, and who are you?"

"I am McMahan, don't you know me? And the dying man who requests your attendance is Mr. McBeth."

"What! Mr. McBeth, the merchant of Brighton, you don't mean?"

"Yes, the same. He has got the diphtheria, bad. The doctors all give him up, and he begged of me to go for you, for God's sake, and of course I started, though I am five hours coming the six miles. But no matter, if we can save a soul."

"True enough, we must go. Can't I take my pony?"

"No, your reverence, you must come with me, behind these cattle, for you could never reach the place with a cutter. We can go back quicker than I came; I broke the road a little, and some men whom I acquainted of my errand turned out to break the road also, to hurry me."

"Good for them. Come up Mac, and try to

break the way for me to the church, to enable me to get the Holy Sacrament and the Holy Oils."

"Yes, sir. I shall tramp on the snow before you, and then your reverence can walk in my tracks. It's a very unnatural thing for to see a priest follow my footsteps. But strange things happen in a strange country like this, your reverence."

"All right. I will follow you while you walk in the true way. I am really glad, for your sake as well as my own, that you brought me this joyous message. I always thought poor McBeth would never die outside the saving fold of the Church."

"Oh, I knew he was always well disposed to the Church, but I did not expect that with the crew he has around him, he would ever be permitted to enter the fold. They are hard cases."

"His family are opposed to his becoming a Catholic, are they?"

"Opposed is no name for it. In fact, they are fit to be put into strait-jackets. He begged of them to send for me two days ago, in order to send me for you; but no, they never let a soul know what he wanted. It is only to-day when I called to see him, and while the family were at breakfast, that he whispered to me to make haste and go for you, that he had no time to live."

"Oh, I hope God will keep him alive until I see him! We must go to see him, or die in the attempt! I will be ready in five minutes. You go in and warm while I am in the church."

The priest and his companion set out at the hour of twelve, noon, for McBeth's house, which they did not reach till near five P.M., owing to the snow-drifts.

Having arrived, the priest entered the house, which was filled with the relatives of the dying man and his wife, and the enemies of the priest and his ministrations. As the priest entered, he was received with gloomy silence; not one in that crowd of *religious* men and women responded to his salutation of "God save all here—good day;" not one to ask him (the priest) to sit down, to come near the stove, or to show him any sign of courtesy, no more than if he was a wild beast, instead of a polite and accomplished gentleman! To the question, "How is Mr. McBeth," not a word was answered, only the frowns were more ferocious, and the grimaces more savage. At length McMahan came in, after having secured his oxen, and boldly invited the priest to the sick man's room. As they were entering, the "old woman," the sick man's mother-in-law, made her grunting intelligible by saying, "McMahan, this is all your doings. It is very unkind of you, it is!"

"No, no," answered Mac; "it is not unkind of me, I only did my duty. Do you think I would not do more for our dying friend? He requested me to go for his reverence, and I went, and would go sixty miles, ay, a hundred instead of six, if needed. You mistake, madam, you do me wrong.

But no matter, I can bear this, and more, so that my friend has his dying request."

"Don't mind answering that old crone," said the priest, "but take me at once to the sick man."

No sooner said than done. There was poor McBeth, almost in the agony of death, and Father John by his side.

"Oh, dear father, I am so glad to see you," said the patient. "I was many years preparing to join the Catholic Church, but I put it off from one cause or another, till now, when I fear it may be too late!"

"No, my dear sir, it's never too late to be converted to God. He is infinitely merciful, and He never rejects those who sincerely seek him. Do you know the creed of the Catholic Church?"

"Yes, I have often read it and studied all that is contained in the creed of Pius the IVth, and I have committed the contents of the short Catholic Catechism."

The priest then satisfied himself by a few leading questions that McBeth was well informed as to the Catholic faith, but as he was baptized in the Methodist Episcopal Church (as it is called), he wished to administer conditional baptism, and also to hear his confession. He requested the bystanders to retire, including McMahan, but the wife of the sick man, and her daughter, a young lady of twenty years, refused to leave the room.

"My dear Marianne," spoke McBeth, "surely

you would not persecute me at this, my death hour, by remaining in the room while I am speaking in private about affairs of conscience, to this servant of God? Surely you would not be so cruel as that, my dear wife?"

"Oh," she exclaimed in anger, "it is such a disgrace for you to join the Catholics. I would not care if you could do it in private. But the ministers will all be so hard on us on account of your dying a Catholic!"

"A disgrace," said the dying man, "to join the oldest Church in the world? *A disgrace* to die in the creed of all our forefathers! *A disgrace* to belong to that Church which contains a thousand times more members than your little sect of yesterday! A disgrace to join the Church of Napoleon, Charlemagne, Columbus and the Marquis of Bute, to come down to our own times! No, the disgrace is not to belong to that Holy Church. God forgive you, Marianne, to cause me to talk so much."

Then the priest, Father John, took up the talking, and asked the cruel wife if she believed in freedom of conscience? if she would like to be deprived of the consolations of her *religion* when dying?—and many other such arguments did he use before the virago gave in. She finally "caved," and, in a flood of angry tears, quit the room—she and her daughter—whereupon the priest proceeded with the services and reconciled McBeth to

the bosom of the Catholic Church. After about an hour he left the room, and joined the crowd in the kitchen, to some of whom he administered a well-deserved rebuke for their bigotry, inhospitality and barbarity, as illustrated in their conduct to himself, to the patient, and to his generous friend McMahan. The war was ended for the present, as regarded the Father John, for the hypocrites trembled before his glance and rebuke; but a second campaign was set on foot against McBeth, by inviting Elder Bull and his new wife, Elders Fribbler, Redtop, and others too numerous to mention, to lay siege to McBeth's conscience again. He was an over-match for them all then, for he had that within him against which the "gates of hell cannot prevail," much less the small arms of all the preachers of Methodism. And when they came with their long frothy prayers, their drowsy sermons, and their counterfeit Bibles, McBeth thrust both his index fingers into his ears, and the loud voices of the preachers had no more effect on his calm soul than the braying of so many donkeys!

The priest left the house, accompanied by McMahan, and they retraced their way as well as they could in the darkness and through the snow-drifts towards the settlement. On the return, however, they got nearly exhausted, men and animals, and had to stop for refreshments and to warm at Mr. Mulroony's, which was midway between Brighton and the church.

On entering through the kitchen, which a roaring fire of dry oak logs warmed and lighted, his salutation of, "God save all here" disturbed the old matron, who was "saying the rosary." On rising from her knees, the old matron asked :

"In the name of God, Father John, is that your reverence, and what in the world brought you out on such a night as this?"

"I have been looking after my sheep. You know it is the duty of the shepherd to expose his life, and even lay it down, if needed, to bring back a wanderer to the fold."

"Glory be to God, that's true enough. Who is it, may I ask, your reverence has been to see this fearful night?"

"Mr. McBeth has just been admitted by me to the communion of the saints. He is in danger of death ; you must pray for him."

"Dear me, I am sorry to hear of his dangerous condition ; but glad, of course, that God's grace has led him to die in the true fold."

"Yes ; we must bless God for this mercy to the poor man, not forgetting what our Lord said, 'Other sheep I have, not of this fold, but they must hear my voice, and there shall be but *one fold and one shepherd.*'"

"Indeed, this is strange," said Master Patrick. "I always thought, for I heard all the people say, that McBeth was a Spiritualist."

"So he is, a true Spiritualist, young man," an-

swered Father John, curtly, "for he embraced the spiritual truth of the Church of God. But he was not a *Spiritist* or Spirit-rapper, by any means. This was a slander on him. You must not give much credit to what you '*always hear*.' Men are apt, now-a-days, young man, to ridicule and slander those whom they dislike or envy. Perhaps there are other people who may remark '*we always heard*' Mr. Patrick Mulroony gave up going to the Church of his parents, and seeing him at camp-meetings, sociables, and other disreputable places, may remark, they '*always heard*' he had embraced some of the prevailing fashionable errors.

"Excuse me, young man, for talking thus. I do not mean to be personal, but I want you to believe very little of the gossip you hear, and to require evidence for everything before you credit it."

The young man felt abashed and made no reply, and Father John was at liberty to accept the invitation of Madam Mulroony to a cup of hot tea and a large venison pastry pie which was placed before him on the broad kitchen-table.

Having got warmed up, our reverend friend and his companion rose up again to encounter the violence of the drifting snow, and it was not far from midnight when they arrived safe at the presbytery.
Deo gratias.



CHAPTER XVIII.

CONVERSATIONS OF A GRAVE NATURE.

THE next day after his reconciliation to the Church of God, through the ministrations of Father John, McBeth died, and the reverend gentleman made preparations for his Christian burial, according to the Catholic ritual, at the earnest request of the dying man. But his narrow-minded relatives, instigated by the shameless bigotry of sectarian preachers, interfered, and the promise made to McBeth in his dying hour, to have his body laid in the consecrated earth of the Catholic cemetery, was violated disgracefully by the very parties who solemnly vowed to see it carried into execution !

The men whose ministrations he rejected at his death, as he had despised them during many years of his life, determined to enjoy their triumph after his death, and as they failed to fetter his soul by the restrictions of their creeds, they made sure, at all hazards, of his body.

“The conduct of these men,” said Father John, “reminds me of what I once read of a holy monk at the point of death. He was dying in peace with God and man, after having been anointed like a brave gladiator against the assaults of Satan. But there happened that a small piece of cloth was stitched to cover a hole on his cassock, which piece was ‘cabbaged’ by the tailor who stitched it on. A short time before the departure of the saint, the devil was seen, in the shape of a small black monkey, sticking on to the cassock and licking the stolen patch of cloth, as a cat licks its own young kitten. As the ‘old boy’ could find nothing belonging to the dying man in body or soul that he could lay any claim to, he was obliged to let him die in peace, and commence to lick the piece of cloth, which was the only thing belonging to the holy man that he could even approach. So, these preachers, not having power to hold the dying man’s soul in their erroneous grasp, held on to his body with the tenacity of demoniac baboons.”

These remarks were rather severe, and the two other clergymen who came to participate with Father John in the Requiem services, mildly rebuked his language. But Father John was greatly annoyed at the unchristian, if not inhuman, conduct of the preachers in regard to the dying request of McBeth, and there was just cause for his severity. And worse than this happened.

Not only did the preachers pray and preach over the remains of one who renounced and anathematized the errors and contradicting tenets at his death, but, to take from the moral effect of the conversion of such an intelligent man as McBeth, they falsely declared, in their meeting-houses and over his coffin, that the man was insane and unconscious of what he was doing when he begged to be received into the bosom of the Catholic Church!

Father John and his two reverend friends,—Father James and Father Saint Denys,—however, on the third day after his death, offered a solemn Requiem for the repose of the departed, and discharged all that the Rubrics enjoined, after Mass, over a *cenotaph*, as the body was not present.

Father James was a fellow-student and of the same nationality with Father John, and they were most intimate friends, and about the same age, but Father Saint Denys was an aged priest, of venerable appearance, whose country was La Belle France, as his name points out, but whose labors in the Lord's vineyard in the Northwest will never be known by man, nor appreciated till the day of Judgment. A man who, like Abraham, in the words of Milton, may be said to have

“Left his *home*, his friends, his native soil—
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who called him to a land unknown,”

of Minnesota. Long before cities, towns or villages were marked out in the city map, Father Saint

Denys might have said of Saint Paul City, and many other famous places in the Northwest, as Virgil did in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, in reference to cities yet unfounded,

"Hæc tunc nomina erunt, nunc sine nomine terræ."

"Places by their names I call, though yet unnamed."

Two generations of men have been born, lived and died, with scarcely a memorial of them remaining, notwithstanding their ardent efforts after earthly fame, while this venerable man, who, in his youth, turned his back on all the glories of a renowned country, and all the attractive charms of a refined society, to hide himself in the wilderness, and to associate with savages, in order to gain them to Christ, still lives, leading the same self-denying life that he has for half a century at least, and daily adding to his merits and austerities. Like a grand old oak on the cultivated farm, which the greedy husbandman spares by reason of its venerable appearance, and the honors that surround its majestic head, so this venerable man has been spared to be a pattern and an example to the world in these degenerate and evil days!

The younger clergymen were all desirous of the society of this holy priest, and it was counted a distinguished privilege when they succeeded, as in the present instance, in getting him to favor them by his presence, even for one day. There was only one way of getting Father Saint Denys to quit his own proper field of duty, even for a day, and that

was, to show him that charity to his neighbor or God's glory would be promoted thereby. Then, notwithstanding his infirmities and his love of holy retirement, he exhibited all the activity of his youth and vigor of his ripe manhood of thirty years of age, when there was a prospect that a sinner would be converted or a soul was to be saved. Then Father Saint Denys, like St. Paul the Apostle, was all zeal, was all "on fire." Then the priest, who invited him to come to his parish, was sure of a favorable answer, and he rejoiced, for it always happened that wherever Father Saint Denys officiated, he left some memento, either of his pious example or impressive preaching, that always effected some remarkable good among the people.

On the occasion to which we refer in this chapter, after the conclusion of the services of the Requiem for the soul of the lamented McBeth, the three clergymen sat down to a frugal dinner, made on some fine trout which Father John, being a famous angler, had caught in a lake near his residence, and as the conversation arose from late events, it was naturally of a *grave* turn.

"Well, I tell you the grave is a terrible thing to encounter," began Father James. "There was poor McBeth, who was as well as any of us a week ago, but now he is six or eight feet down under the snow, in the frozen earth, there to remain forgotten after a few weeks, perhaps, for thousands of years to come!"

"Yes, true," said Father Saint Denys. "The grave is terrible to human nature; but it is only to those who are not prepared that it is really terrible. It has no terrors for a man who serves God, and keeps a good conscience."

"My friend, Father James," said the priest of the Irish settlement, "I am sorry to hear you speak so of the grave. I know the reason why you have such a horror of the peaceful grave. It is because you are such a handsome fellow. Do you know that I love the grave above all other places next to the tabernacle? I tell you, when I ramble out in the evening among those tombstones in the cemetery, I envy the happy thousands who rest in peace there."

"Oh! you are drawing on your fertile imagination now, Father John."

"No I am not. What do you say to those feelings of mine, Father Saint Denys?"

"Indeed, I am not astonished that one would feel as you do. There is nothing wrong for a man to desire to leave this world and be at rest with Christ. St. Paul desired 'to be dissolved,' so as to enjoy our Lord."

"Certainly, that is not only not wrong, but even a holy desire," resumed Father James. "But for a man to wish to *enjoy* the grave, that is another thing."

"I say there is not only nothing wrong in the wish to lie in the grave," rejoined Father John;

"but insist that it is a good thing to have such a desire. But I leave this to the decision of our very reverend friend here. I know this much, however, that I love the grave, as I said before, next to the sanctuary, and I envy the dead. It appears to me there is no place on the earth so *true* and *pure* as the grave."

"Well, what a paradox," interrupted Father James. "How do you show that the grave, the abode of worms and maggots, is *pure*, and that place to be *true*, as you call it, which is 'fair without and foul within,' where there is nothing but corruption and the noisome dissolution of the flesh of man?"

"Well, first, the grave is *true*, for it is just the size of the body, six feet deep by two wide, about seven feet long. A nice cell, neither too small nor too large. See what falsehood and hypocrisy are exhibited in building palaces, mansions and houses! If you were the only inhabitant in an island, and to have all the materials ready at hand for a palace, would you erect one, or only a shanty not much larger than a grave?"

"Oh, that's an exceptional case. That's no argument in favor of your paradox."

"Don't interrupt me, Father James. I am not done yet with showing the beauties of the grave. When you are in the grave you do not fear the sheriff."

"I don't know that. In England, they used

to arrest the bodies of dead men, and keep them imprisoned for debt, for weeks and months."

"We don't speak of those things that are past now. Let me finish what I have got to say in praise of the grave, and then you may talk. In the grave you hear no scandals, you listen to no blasphemies or profane words. You suffer no pain or ache. You have no devilish temptations. There is no pride, no aristocracy, no hunger, thirst or nakedness. You sleep calmly and peacefully, and where? On your mother's breast, the Earth, which, when the sun and air, and rains, and storms, and men, and women, and debtors, and creditors, and liars, and detractors—all, all like so many voracious hounds—hunt you, sicken you, strike you, harass you, plague, persecute and kill you, with disease, war, famine, lightning or accident; when all nature casts you off, the earth takes you back to her comforting bosom; and there you lie at ease till the last trumpet. Oh, what a grand illustration of Divine charity."

"And what becomes of you in the grave?"

"How still and peaceful is the grave,
Where, life's vain tumults past,
The appointed house, by Heaven's decree,
Receives us all at last.

"The wicked, there from troubling cease,
Their passions rage no more,
And there the weary pilgrim rests,
From all the toils he bore.

“ There rest the pris’ners now released,
From slavery’s sad abode,
No more they hear the oppressor’s voice,
Or dread the tyrant’s rod.

“ There servants, masters, small and great,
Partake the same repose,
And there in peace the ashes mix,
Of those who once were foes.”

“ Why, you are purified, cleansed and clarified, so as, perhaps, to prepare you again to join your old companion, the soul, which quit your tenement in disgust, likely, so many years or centuries ago. There can be no doubt that the grave exerts a great influence on the elementary particles of the body. The earth draws back from it all its corrupt humors and elements of decay, the sulphur, the phosphorus, the calcium, the iron, and the many other chemical compositions that go to make up the body ; but those minerals are not destroyed or lost. No, no ; the ancients believed in transmigration of souls, but they were not far wrong. If it was the transmigration of bodies they meant, they were right. Our bodies are the parts of us that transmigrate and return to their ultimate principles only, perhaps, and most likely to be rendered fit to join the soul at the final restoration of mankind. And when you recollect that not only does every man live by God’s omnipotent creative power, but that each of us lives at the *very time* we do live, and no other, by divine

ordination. It cannot be wrong to think that some are in the grave for thousands, some for hundreds, and some will be tenants thereof for a few years only, to fulfil some important design of Providence. Hence the Church consecrates the grave, sprinkles it with holy water, perfumes it with incense, and utters her most solemn benedictions over that narrow house of her dead children. Who does not desire to be there?

“In old and Eastern lands they had their graves in the churches, in the vaults, and where that could not be, there was devoted to the dead the churchyard, called ‘God’s acre,’ so sacred was the grave held in the old Christian tradition of the Catholic nations. Then, the living remembered the dead and held communion with them by praying over their graves, and offering their suffrages for their souls. Now, municipal law has changed all these things. The grave is now allowed only to be opened in some out-of-the-way country plot of ground, that is counted good for nothing else, and hence, the grave is a horror to most people, as, I am sorry it seems to be to you, my friend, Father James!”

“Oh, no, I did not mean it in the sense that you do,” responded the latter. “I did not speak of the grave in the religious sense, as you view it. I only meant that the grave, as the emblem of dissolution and decay, was horrid, as contradistinguished to life. I allow, in a supernatural sense, and to the eye of faith, the grave is a peaceful, sacred place.

But in the sense of a charnel house, as the remorseless devourer of all that is fair, estimable and lovable in life, the grave is a horrible catastrophe, repulsive to our sensibilities."

"Gentlemen," interposed Father Saint Denys, "I think ye are both right. Death or the grave, as a temporal evil, is a terrible destiny or end of a joyous happy life. But viewed in a supernatural light, and in the hope of a happy resurrection, we may say with Saint Paul, 'O grave, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' I must say, however, that you, Father John, have taken, to me, a very new view of the subject. It never occurred to me that the body might be *purified* in the grave, in contact with its kindred earth, as the soul, undoubtedly, is purified in its dwelling-place, previous to its admission to the Beatific vision!"

"Gentlemen, I am always deeply and sensibly affected at two of my official services," resumed Father John. "The one is, when I administer the last Sacrament to a dying christian. I tremble and weep, lest I may be wanting in the proper dispositions to administer them rightly, and I may become answerable for the dying man's demerits. And again, when I am repeating those awful words,

*'Libera mi Domine in die
Illa tremenda, quando coeli
Movendi sunt et terræ.'*

'Deliver me, O Lord, in that dreadful day,' etc. The last man I buried, honest Michael Mul-

roony, looked so calm in death that I imagined he heard every word I read, and had power to tell everything that passed in my mind. I could hardly proceed with the service through emotion."

"By-the-by, Father John," asked the very Rev. missionary, "I am glad you mentioned his name. I am told that his son has left the Church. Is there any truth in the report?"

"I do not think he has renounced his religion so far as to attach himself to any of those sectarian churches; but the young scamp is no doubt going astray. He has already improved his name by calling himself "*Paran M. Ronay*," instead of the common name of *Pat Mulroony*. He has given up going to the church and the sacraments, and frequents all the 'sociables,' 'singing-schools,' 'spelling-schools,' and all other night assemblages."

"Dear sir, I am sorry to hear this of him. It must be very afflicting to his mother and brothers and sisters."

"The poor old lady is almost heartbroken from the way her son carries on. The fear is now, not that he will change his religion, for I don't think he has much of that article to barter; but I am credibly informed that the young scamp is going to take a rib, as they call it."

"What, going to get married?"

"Yes; there is a cunning dame at the school, or academy, as they style it, who has set her cap for him, and as there are a great many rivals for

her hand, this young fellow is determined that he shall carry off the prize from the ring of young lads who contend for her."

"And she not of the Catholic Church either, perhaps?"

"No, she professes to be a Methodist. But, in my opinion, she would be a Turk or a Hindoo, if she could get a nice young man for a husband."

"Did you warn him of his danger, Father John?"

"Yes sir, frequently. But he is so conceited and impudent, that I have made up my mind never again to speak on the subject to him."

"Too bad, entirely too bad! May God comfort his poor mother!"





CHAPTER XIX.

FATHER JOHN AT THE ACADEMY.

THE priest of the Irish settlement had a sick call some fifty miles and more on the Wisconsin side of the river, to a man who got injured lumbering in the "Big Woods," and it was so late when he returned that he was not able to reach home, but had to put up for the night at the hotel of Mr. Broadhead, in Brighton. His black Canadian pony, "Billy," had given out through exhaustion, and he was very much fatigued himself. Hence, it was near nine o'clock next morning before Father John woke up. It was a beautiful summer day; the air calm, the sun's rays falling on the plain without the intervention of a cloud; vegetation luxuriant and bursting into maturity. All was silent and still. Not a note of a bird from the adjacent oak groves, not a murmur of a stream, not the neighing of a horse, the lowing of kine, whistle of a steam-engine, or chirping of

an insect, interrupted the tranquillity of this splendid morning. The poor man, Father John, felt his limbs sore, and suffered from pains in his knee joints, from having to sit so many hours crippled up in a buggy, expressly made of small capacity in order to secure strength sufficient to stand the rugged roads over which he had to travel in attending to numerous calls of his parishioners in the remoter parts of his mission.

During his half hour's morning meditation, which he never omitted, at home or abroad, in hotel, steamboat, farmer's house, or railroad shanty, the holy calm that reigned in all directions served to elevate his mind and fill his heart with love, gratitude and gladness. He forgot his pains, or rejoiced that he was rendered worthy to suffer in the discharge of his duty, and from the calm of earth, perceptible to his senses, his soul was lifted up and transported to the ecstatic calm and tranquillity of Heaven.

Rising from his kneeling posture by his bedside, the sound of drums and instrumental music saluted his ear. He looked through the front window, and saw a procession, with flags, boughs, and little banners and mottoes, all mounted on ten or twelve wagons, crowded with young men and young ladies, the former wearing rosettes and ribbons, and the latter dressed in white, and the entire body proceeding at a slow pace towards the academy. They were the pupils of the academy, accompanied

by their teachers and parents or guardians, about to hold "commencement" exercises, or prize examinations, before leaving for home during the summer vacation.

Father John could, and did, read many of the mottoes, for the procession halted a few minutes before the hotel. Some of the mottoes, he noticed, were blasphemous, some profane, and most of them in bad taste. For instance, some of the most prominent among them read thus: "Jesus Christ is our captain, and Elder Bull our lieutenant under him." "The Bible our religion, the Constitution our Creed." "Free thoughts, free schools, free religion."

"'Tis bad taste in the authors of these elegant sentiments that they did not add 'free love,' to make the sentence musical," said Father John to the hotel-keeper, who came into his room to call him down to breakfast, and to inform him, also, that several of the citizens who heard his reverence preach once or twice, were very anxious that he, Father John, should be present at the exercises to-day, and wished him to make some remarks to encourage or enlighten the pupils.

"I hope you will come down to the academy after breakfast, Father John," said Mr. Broadhead; "all our citizens want you there, and the vice-president, indeed the principal man there, Mr. Squires, wishes very much that you should be present, and say something."

"My dear friend," answered Father John, "what business would I have among such a bigoted set? Don't you know all the preachers will be there, including holy Elder Bull, and his wife number two, and Fribbler and the rest of the shallow-pated fellows. They would insult me or my religion if I were to go there, and I might be provoked to say something that would not be very agreeable to them. Therefore it is best for me to keep away from the academy."

"Well now, Father John, you need not fear any such thing will happen as you apprehend. I am one of the board of trustees of the academy, and will guarantee that there won't be a single word said to hurt your feelings, or if there should, the man that dares to do so will be rebuked severely, and you shall have ample opportunity to vindicate yourself and your Church."

"I am very much averse to intrude myself among those men. Did you notice the mottoes they carry on their banners,—so odd, not to call them blasphemous?"

"Yes, I did. But, though these are in bad taste, I allow, we are not responsible for them. Those flags and mottoes are the work of those half-crazed women who hang around this academy, but whom we shall soon get rid of. Come down, Father John, I beg it as a favor to myself and Mrs. Broadhead, who says she won't go down unless you are there. Besides, there are some of your people there, and

the principal student who I presume will carry off all the prizes is that young man, Ronay, whose father died last winter. There are also a few other Catholic pupils there whom you ought to look after."

"Well then, I will go, relying on your promise that I won't be insulted. If there are some of my people there, sure enough, I ought to look after them. That is my duty. I would not go a step to look after this young man you call 'Ronay,' but whose real name is Mulroony, for he is a conceited fop; but, as I understand there are a few others, not so far advanced as he, in the academy, I must hear and see how they progress. So I shall go after breakfast."

"I thank you, Father John; I will go and tell my wife, who will be very happy to see you there, and happier still if she can hear you say something that will open the eyes of these people, who look on themselves as the elect. My wife is a Southern woman, and having been educated in a Catholic nunnery, knows a good deal of that church, and feels very indignant when she hears so much that is absurd and false said against Catholics, by these uneducated men whom we have as religious guides in this part of the country."

The academic halls were full almost to suffocation when Father John arrived, and there was a flutter when he was seen to enter, accompanied by Mr. Broadhead and one or two more of the citizens.

The exercises were partly over when they ascended the platform stage, which was reserved for the examiners and invited guests. Father John got a seat on a very prominent part of the stage, and his entrance caused an interruption of a few moments. The students had their attention riveted on the priest, and there was a titter among the young ladies, so that the orator who was expatiating on the glories of "our free schools," who was no other than young Mulroony, became suddenly distracted and very near got *stuck* in his *sophomorical* efforts in praise of the common schools. Young Mulroony, however, rallied under the interruption, and concluded his peroration amid salvos of repeated and loud applause.

The next young speaker, Elder Bull's son, had "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," for his subject, but, being of a delicate constitution and weak lungs, he failed to excite either applause or enthusiasm, notwithstanding that his father, who probably composed his discourse, invited the crowd to approbation, by repeated clapping of his hands, and stamping on the floor. All would not do—either the subject or the orator did not *take* with the audience; and hence poor "Spike" retired in silence among his obscure companions in the hall.

"The character of Washington" was the theme of the next speaker—a young man named Smith, and the name of the Father of his country, if not

the ability of the speaker, elicited the usual amount of "hurrahs."

But the most elegant and elaborate piece delivered was that of Miss Lydia Squires, a relative of the male principal of the institution, who was a very interesting young lady, and spoke the eulogy on the character of Christopher Columbus, in a very pleasing manner, and well-written discourse. After the candidates for honors and premiums had all concluded, and the clerical spouters had delivered themselves of the usual rant in praise of religious liberty, the Bible, free schools, and free thoughts, Father John was called on by Mr. Squires to deliver any remarks that might to him seem appropriate on that auspicious occasion.

Father John stood up, and, after the very warm greeting with which he was received ceased, said he was glad that he was present to witness the very respectable proficiency displayed by most of those whom he had listened to with so much satisfaction. He disliked particularizing any of the able pieces he heard delivered, but there was one among them all to which he could not help referring, as most appropriate as a theme among the young aspirants for academic honors, namely, the character of Christopher Columbus. The character of that great man was one which would ever stand out in bold relief, among Christian heroes, as the most prominent and the most worthy of imitation by all aspirants to the honors and rewards of well-

earned and unsullied fame. "The theme was well chosen, and the style in which it was composed, elevated and elegant, and the manner of its delivery refined and highly creditable to the young lady from whose fair lips it flowed so smoothly. But, gentlemen, there was something wanting, something left out in that elegant composition of Miss Squires, which, had it been inserted, instead of left out (no fault of hers) in her chaste discourse, would have made it of thrilling interest, and sublime in effect on the hearers. Columbus has been beautifully depicted before our eyes as a mariner, a soldier, a patriot, a husband, a father, a governor, a hero; but not a word said of him as a *Christian*, a *Catholic*, a *Religious*, or a missionary. Nay, do I not perceive an incredulous smile on the faces of our young friends here, when I supply these omitted titles to his honor, certain that they have gone through all their studies, read all the histories put in their hands, without once suspecting that Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America, the new world, was a pious Catholic; that all, or most part, of this new world was traversed by the busy feet of missionaries of the Catholic Church, in their eager search to gain souls to Christ, about a *century* before any of the now numerous Protestant sects set their feet on the virgin soil of the new world?

"Nay, more, does not undoubted historical truth teach, and why should it be kept back from the

minds of your children, that the discovery of the New World was made under the inspirations and auspices of that Catholic Church which you are often told nowadays is the *enemy of progress*.

Yes, there can be no doubt of it, that it was the abbot of the Franciscan convent of La Rabida, that inspired, encouraged, aided and urged Columbus to persevere in his resolution to discover the globe, and for *this only* reason that he, the abbot, conceived the hope that souls were to be gained to Christ by this enterprise. And next to the Franciscan abbot, Jeronimo de Marchena was the abbot of the Dominican Convent of Salamanca, Columbus' patron and assistant, in hope that the kingdom of Christ would be enlarged thereby. And again, it was the Papal Nuncio Santangel who backed Columbus, till finally Pope Innocent the VIII., John De Cibo, gave his encouragement and benediction to the bold designs of the Genoese navigator. Finally, Columbus himself states in his journal, December 6, 1492, that he undertook the hazards of the discovery with a view of acquiring means to be able to redeem the tomb of Christ from the power of the Saracens, and to render the Holy See independent in a temporal point of view. And in fine, when Isabella, the Catholic, the glorious sovereign of Spain, after having driven the Saracens from their last stronghold of the Alhambra, was so reduced in finances, that she had to decline the magnificent propositions of Columbus,

and when he was on his way to France, to lay his proposals before the king of that nation, it was the hope of the merit she would gain in the salvation of souls, more attractive than her glories in having expelled the Moors, that induced her, at the instance of the Abbot of La Rabida, to recall Columbus, and to offer to sell her jewels, rather than miss the merit of being the instrument in the spread of the Catholic faith. If there be any country in the world that ought to be called a *Catholic Country*, it is America; for it was discovered by not only a Catholic admiral and sailors, but the inspiration and design of the discovery was a pious Catholic enterprise, having for its end the spread and glory of the Catholic Church. In that sense the country is Catholic, whatever the people may be. Why is it, gentlemen, I ask, that these facts are ignored? Is it favorable to the development of the minds of your children to hide off the truth and plant error and falsehood therein? Let the whole truth be told, if anything is taught. Let Hume, and Gibbon, and Macaulay, as well as Wilson, and Guyot, and other smaller suppressors of truth and perpetrators of lies, be banished from our schools, and then we shall know the whole truth, and bigotry and sects will cease, and charity and benevolence will be spread among mankind, or at least that portion of the human race that inhabit this grand continent, discovered, I may say, by the Catholic Church, and destined to wit-

ness the most splendid development of all the acquirements of civilization, properly so called."

After the address of Father John, of which the foregoing is only a brief report, one of the elders, a Rev. Mr. Gully, remarked, "that what the reverend priest had stated was *new* to himself, and, he presumed, to all present; that if these were *genuine* facts which Father John had introduced, it was strange that our American or English histories were silent on these supposed facts; that, as far as he himself was concerned, he desired all to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

Father John rejoined by allowing that the facts adduced by him were probably strange to the Rev. elder, whose reading of history did not extend beyond English authors; but they were no less true on that account. He acknowledged that English and Protestant historians were silent on these important points. But there was a reason for their silence. These historians knew very well that if their histories proved anything favorable to the Catholic Church, their volumes would not sell. Such was the prejudice of the Protestant mind, and its horror of Popery, at the date of the writing of these histories, that to have adduced any evidence honorable to the Church of Rome, would consign their volumes forever to oblivion. But now, when the public mind is comparatively unprejudiced, it is disgraceful to leave the people in ignorance of the truth of history.

These remarks of Father John were warmly received and lustily cheered, and he retired amidst the plaudits of all except the preachers, who did not like that any present should seem for a moment to regard the Catholic Church otherwise than as their bigotry had depicted that venerable institution.





CHAPTER XX.

MICKEY BOCAGH AND HIS WAY OF CONDUCTING AN ARGUMENT.

MICKEY BOCAGH was a man who might be called a representative, or, at least, a specimen, of a certain numerous class of laborers known as "river men," in the West and Northwestern part of the country; the same people were called "navvies" in the East. The majority of the river-men were natives of this country, while a minority of them, respectable in number, were "old country" born, but so disciplined and accomplished in the accent and slang of the Yankees as to pass for natives of the soil. Mickey Bocagh belonged to this latter section of sovereign citizens. He was no more than ten years out of the "ould sod," as he called his native land when speaking among his countrymen, but yet, so perfect was his nasal twang when on the steamboat or the "drive," that the captains and overseers always mistook him for a full-blooded "Hoosier," or "Sucker," instead of an Irishman.

Although Mickey was lame, or rather halt from an anchylosis of the right knee joint, caused by a thrust of a policeman's bayonet at a Fenian skirmish in Ireland, he was, notwithstanding, a very active laborer, of great strength and remarkable endurance. He worked most of his time on the rivers of the West and South, the Mississippi, the Missouri, Ohio, and St. Croix, and always obtained the highest wages, for though he was of a rough exterior and of a very cross temper, as "ugly as a wild cat," as the captain described him, yet he could do the work of three ordinary men, and was besides a reliable hand and strictly temperate, as far as drink was concerned. But, with the possession of these and a few other virtues, such as attachment to the disciplinary regulations of his religion regarding abstinence and fasts, and affection for his aged mother, Mickey was also cursed by a most ungovernable temper, was gifted with a tongue of extraordinary eloquence in vituperation and profaneness, and wielded a fist the blow of which was equal to a stroke of a hammer. Many an insulting Norwegian and insolent negro have lived to rue the hour that they contradicted the statements or disregarded the stern orders of Mickey Bocagh while unloading a wood-scow on the Mississippi, or landing freight on the slippery banks of the great father of waters. His prowess in this line soon made him the talk and the terror of river-men from New Orleans to St. Paul, and from Pittsburgh to Little Rock.

He got extra wages and was sure of employment—especially under the severest captains, who were notorious for their cruelty or tyrannical disposition, not because he was of a cruel or sanguinary temper, but from the fact that they knew that Mickey, by example, as well as by words, was sure to get all the work that was in them, out of the hands.

Mickey enjoyed another marked distinction also on the river. He could travel free on all the great rivers of the West and South, from the Gulf of Mexico to St. Anthony's Falls, and the Alleghany to Omaha. He paid no fare, but simply gave his name, "Mickey Bocagh," and that was generally satisfactory. But where he chanced to be unknown to a captain or clerk, who was but a novice at the rules of the river, and who had not heard of Mickey, he soon made himself known by his resistance to any attempts to be put ashore, which brought all the help of the boat to where he stood at bay, and in that case, there was sure to be some of the *posse* of the captain who knew Mickey, and soon convinced him that it was useless to put him off.

"Sure he was no other," they said, "than the famous Mickey Bocagh, who was never yet put off a boat, and who always carried a *free pass* at the ends of his steel knuckles."

Explanations would then ensue, relations of the river hero's exploits would follow, until all the crowd, originally gathered to witness Mickey's

expulsion from the boat, would be convulsed with laughter, and all would agree, including the captain, that he "was a *dogoned* clever fellow," and that he "deserved to ride free on every boat."

Thus, at once, would public opinion be reversed, and the man who was threatened to be put on the shore of a desert island in the Mississippi, as an impostor and a desperate character, by the very daringness of his conduct, made himself a hero and a man of note and importance. Then everybody wanted to treat Mickey Bocagh, and shake hands with him. The crowd which a few minutes before were ready to fling him overboard, or to "lynch" him, or sheath their knives in his flesh, now formed themselves in a circle around him, to listen to recitals of his desperate encounters with gamblers and highwaymen, or his successful resistance to the efforts of the entire crew of a steamboat to put him ashore.

"Of such stuff is the hero made" frequently in our western country, and so rude the paths to popularity.

But Mickey's heroic achievements were not always displayed on the rivers, or on board steamboats or rafts. The neighbors at home, near his mother's house, at the border of "Coon Grove," were frequently made to feel that Mickey could be brave on land as well as on water, as the following instance will illustrate:

Generally before the opening of navigation in

the spring, especially when the season was late and help scarce, Mickey hired out with some of his neighbors for a month or two, till all the grain was sowed. He was employed by young Mulroony soon after his father's death, and by his well-known energy contributed not a little to the early putting in of all his wheat, so that he anticipated the sudden return of snow and cold which set in about the 25th of April, and thus his crops were near a month ahead of all his neighbors. He continued in the same employment during the whole summer owing to the indisposition of his aged mother, whom he visited every evening after his work.

Young Mulroony having his work well advanced in the summer, before harvest set in, sent his man, Mickey, to work for one Mr. Muggins, a rich neighboring farmer to whom he was indebted for ploughing. Mickey was employed in fencing his land for Mr. Muggins, who was a very religious man in his own estimation, and who, no doubt, expected if he did not convert Mickey to his own church, the Universalist, he at least would make an impression on him favorable to his way of thinking. Hence, at meals, or rather before them, he, Muggins, delivered himself of very long prayers, so long that the dinner generally got cold before he concluded.

Mickey showed no signs of impatience for a meal or two at these protracted orations, but at last he commenced to eat without paying any atten-

tion to the rambling prayers of the pious farmer. The latter appeared very much displeased, and, as long as his prayers seemed to have no effect on the hasty temper of Mickey, thought he would try what virtue there was in polemics.

"My friend," he said, "I forget your name, or rather I did not ask Mr. Ronay what I should call you."

"My name is Mickey Bocagh, Mr. Muggins, at your service," answered the latter. "I suppose it makes no difference what my name is, if I work for you a man's share. That's what I came to you for, sent by Mr. Mulroony, my present employer."

"Oh, yes. Work is very good in its place, but a knowledge of the Bible is better. I suppose you have never studied the Bible much, friend Mickey?"

"You are wrong to suppose that, Mr. Muggins. I guess I know as much of the Bible, perhaps, as yourself, though I do not parade my knowledge."

"Oh, indeed! I judged if you had read the Holy Book, that you would have waited till I finished my asking a blessing before you began to eat."

"There you are out again. For does not the Bible tell us there were men like yourself, in the time of our Saviour, who *made long prayers* and turned up the whites of their eyes, and yet were condemned as hypocrites by our Lord? I thought of the Pharisees, when I saw you with your eyes up and heard your prayer, reminding the Lord of

what a holy man you were, while the food, God's gift to us, was spoiling before you. If that's all you know of the Bible, you should go to school and learn more. I can beat that myself."

"We must ask a blessing before partaking of the good things of the Lord," rejoined the farmer.

"So we must, and I always do make the sign of the cross and ask God to bless these gifts coming from His bounty. But you make a sermon, and a poor one at that, and while you are 'gassing,' the victuals are being spoiled under your nose, and unfit to be eaten."

"I am sorry to hear you talk so, friend stranger. But I make allowance for your education, and shall pray for you to the Lord to give you a change of heart."

"Spare yourself the trouble, Mr. Muggins. I know my duty, sir, as well as you do yours, and I keep my religious views to myself, not like you, who try to make-believe that you are a great pillar of your church. I tell you I came here to work and not to learn anything in religion, or anything else from the like of you, an ignorant man like myself."

These conversations went on for two or three days—the farmer sparring with the sailor or river man on the subjects of religion, conversion, the Bible, and other topics that ought to be too sacred to be made a table-talk of.

Mickey's temper he felt to be getting up to the

temperature that generally governed him on board the steamboats, and hence he tried to avoid extremes by staying away from the table till after grace was said; by keeping silent, or by making a great clatter with his knife and fork, in order that he might not hear the provoking religious nonsense of the farmer. It was no use, however. The farmer, Muggins, was overflowing with proselytizing zeal, and out it must come, whether Mickey liked it or not. He began to talk of the Catholics—how absurd was their creed; how fast it was declining in this free country.

“I cannot see it in that light,” answered Mickey, after a long silence. “I have travelled as much of this country as any other man of my age—east, west, north and south, and on every side I see evidences of the progress of the Catholic Church. I see churches rise, colleges erected, convents founded, schools built, bishops multiplying, and converts coming in by the hundreds and thousands. These are queer signs of decline.”

“All this is only for a while. Soon all this will vanish like a mist, stranger.”

“Thank God, you are no prophet. It may vanish, but who can tell? Not you, surely, nor the like of you, who can’t tell what sort of weather you will have to-morrow; what presumption then to predict the fate of the Catholic Church.”

“Oh, we can tell, the Bible can tell. Catholics have not the Bible. They are not allowed to read it.”

"That's what I call a lie, Muggins, for you or any other man to say. We have the Bible, and the true Bible, what you have not, but a bogus one."

"Well, well, keep cool, stranger. Let us come to facts. There is P. M. Ronay, your boss, he is just a-going to jine the Methodists, and by all accounts he is a well-read young man."

"Who is P. M. Ronay? I don't know such a man. You don't mean Mr. Patrick Mulroony, I hope, the man I work for?"

"Yes, the same. The Irish call him Mulroony, but we call him 'Ronay,' a more refined name."

"Yes, the same as ye call yourselves Christians, though Universalists, Methodists, Quakers, Shakers, and Muggletonians, and other such titles are your proper names. It is a falsehood to call a man out of his name. Further, it is false to say that young Mulroony is going to join any of your piebald churches. He is going to do nothing of the kind, I tell you. He may marry one of your free-love women, but he never can become an apostate, by renouncing the Church of all ages, in which he was baptized and confirmed, and joining one of your shabby sects of yesterday?"

"Yes he is, I know, for Elder Bull, the *honorable* Senator, told me no later than last Sabbath. It's what *you* ought to do, stranger."

"Me? I would as soon take a razor and cut my throat from ear to ear. I am bad enough already,

from contact with the wicked people with whom I have been obliged to associate. But, if I were to quit my religion, then I might despair. If I repent and change my life, there is mercy for me while I believe in the Catholic Church, but if I become an apostate, a heretic, then indeed is my fate sealed."

"Oh, that's only what the priests taught you. Give up these notions. Be like other men. Follow the great current of the great American people to their destiny."

"No, I won't *follow* the current, but try to *stem* and resist the great flood that carries so many millions down to death and destruction."

"You are foolish, you are foolish! See how sensible your boss is—he, the best scholar in the academy, who took all the prizes and made the valedictory address; he is a credit, even if he is Irish, while you, a native, I presume, of Indiana, follow those old-fashioned ways of the Catholics."

"I do not care what my boss does, though as yet he has done nothing to be ashamed of. What, is he to be a pattern for me? No sir, I would not follow his example one step. I know what these free-love women are, after ten years' steamboating. I know too much about such cattle to be gulled by their arts, like young inexperienced Mulroony. When he is as old a tar as I am, then he will estimate at the true value such nice women as Polly Spoones, and the rest of the free-love crowd."

"Oh, no, you mistake. It is a high honor for that young Irishman to get the hand of one of our most religious young ladies ; indeed it is."

"It is, eh? Well, I renounce such honors as to get an old maid for my companion for life, if she stays with him for life, and not for a time, as that *holy* man, Elder Bull, stayed with his wife only as long as she continued *compatible* or comfortable, ha, ha, ha! Oh, what *religious* men your preachers are!"

"Give up your old notions, friend stranger. I see you are not eating any meat to-day, only butter instead. Come, allow me to help you with some nice ham," and, suiting the action to the word, he placed a large slice of fat pork on the top of Mickey's mashed potatoes. The latter raised his knife to his shoulder, in the act of plunging it into Muggins' throat, but he checked himself, and dropped his knife, and standing up with lightning in his eye, dealt him, Muggins, such a blow on the temple with his left hand as stretched him roaring on the floor, and then, raising his stiff leg he gave him one kick which caused his bones to rattle on the floor. "Confound you," he said, "no man ever insulted me before in that way but one, and he never insulted a man after me. But you are too mean, I will only kick you like a dog." And so saying, he took his hat and walked out to his work.

Mrs. Muggins was at first greatly alarmed for

the fate of her husband. But he soon rallied, under the application of a little pain-killer and brandy.

Mickey Bocagh returned to the house in the evening to his supper of nice fresh trout caught in Pine Creek. There was no allusion made to the outrage that took place at noon, and from that day to the end of the time he worked for Mr. Muggins there was no religious controversy at meals, there was no long prayer under pretence of blessing, there were no angry allusions to countries or creeds. But one thing *there was*, most assuredly, and that was a very good fish dinner on all Fridays and Fast days while Mickey Bocagh worked at Farmer Muggins', and this was not only very satisfactory to himself, but to most of the hired help, who felt the same grievance regarding food on days of fast and abstinence as Mickey did, but who lacked sufficient intelligence and independence to demand a change.





CHAPTER XXI.

“MICKEY BOCAGH” REPENTS OF HIS RASHNESS, AND INSTRUCTS HIS MISTRESS.

FROM the day of Mickey's brutal assault on Mr. Muggins till the end of the entire month that he worked for the latter, there was not a word of angry discussion or dispute about religion between him or any member of the farmer's family, and he had the same accommodation extended to him, regarding the days of abstinence and fast prescribed by the Church, as if he worked for a Catholic family. Mrs. Muggins ordered her good man to provide her larder with a barrel of good Newfoundland codfish, and besides, she left orders with a German named Boff, in the village, who made a livelihood by fishing, to bring some fresh lake or river fish on Fridays for the use of the hired help. She tried to hush up all the gossip about the assault on her husband by Mickey, and prevented him from having the latter prosecuted. She very sensibly remarked that her husband

caused by provocation, if he did not deserve, what he received from the rough hands of the river man, and that instead of prosecuting his assailant, he should take a lesson from the occurrence for his guidance in future in his conversation and conduct towards his hired help.

The unlucky river man himself, after his passion cooled off, regretted exceedingly what had occurred, and took occasion the next day after the fracas to declare to the lady of the house, the farmer's wife, that he was sorry for what had happened, and that he would gladly forfeit the earnings of a whole season to have what occurred undone again. "I have such a high temper, madam," he said, "that sometimes I do not think of what I do till after it is done. We river men generally return an insult by a blow before we take time to speak. I am real sorry; I hope the boss is not much hurt. I did not wait to think what I was going to do till the harm was done."

"Oh, not much hurt, Mickey," answered the matron, mildly; "I really blame my husband for his having interfered with you or your religion. It was none of his business what you did believe, or what you eat. Don't feel uneasy about it. It is only a scratch, and with a little tincture of arnica it will be well in a few days."

"Too bad, entirely. I hope you will tell your husband how bad I feel, and that I am satisfied to do all in my power to atone for the injury done to

him, madam. I can't express how sorry I am for what I did."

"Don't you feel uneasy; he has already allowed that it was all his own fault. He does not want a word said about it. I never knew, nor did my husband, that Catholics were so particular about what they eat on Fridays and fast days. We have had Catholics here often to work, and they never made no objection to the food placed before them; and as I could never learn on what ground the Catholics objected to the use of flesh meat on Fridays, I, of course, took no pains to supply them with fish or any other food, except such as we used ourselves. I would like to know the reason why Catholics won't use flesh on Fridays."

"I am but a very poor Catholic," answered Mickey, "one merely in name, but bad as I am, I can explain to you, madam, why the Church forbids us to use flesh meat on Fridays. All Christians believe that our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross, to save us, on a Friday, called Good Friday. And, as His Divine flesh was torn and wounded by His cruel executioners on that day, we, to show our detestation of that guilt, that nailed Him to the cross after scourging his flesh, abstain from the use of all flesh on that and all Fridays of the year. This is one reason why we don't use flesh meat on Fridays."

"Indeed, my friend, I think that is a very good reason, and a very worthy motive for the abstinence

of Catholics. I heard the practice frequently ridiculed, but surely none can ridicule or condemn it, but rather approve of this custom of Catholics after hearing these motives."

"There are other reasons too, for our fasts and abstinence: our clergy tell us we must mortify our passions and wicked inclinations, and subdue our fleshly desires; hence, they order us to fast, as well as pray, as our Lord did, to attain that desirable end of a Christian life. St. Paul, St. John the Baptist, and even our Lord himself, fasted, leaving us an example to imitate them at an humble distance. Hence, we fast, hoping for the reward He promised those who fast and pray. Our clergy thus teach us, by advice and example, to walk in the paths pointed out by the saints."

"I see the wisdom of their teaching. I am sorry that our preachers inculcate these duties so seldom. There is another thing, also, I never could understand, and that is, why it is that Catholics are so attached to their priests. I had girls here often to live with me, and they would not go to a ball, or join in any other pleasant frolic, for fear of the priest. They used to tell me the priest forbade them. And when I used to urge that the priest could never know of their doings, they would answer yes, that he would know all that they would do amiss. I never could understand this, no more than the attachment of all Catholics to their priests. *We* don't regard our ministers as

Catholics do their priests. I would like to know the reason of this difference between Catholics and other denominations."

"That I can explain to you, too, ma'am. Catholics all love their priests, and fear them as well. And the reason of this is, because our priests have *power* which your ministers have not."

"*Power*, do you say? Why, what power can they have? They are generally foreigners in this country, many of them not citizens, even. How then can they have power, for instance, like Elder Bull, who is now a Senator, and can get a man into any nice situation, as Postmaster, or Revenue Collector, because of his *power* with the President and the Congress."

"Ah, there is where the difference lies. Your preachers may have *power among men*, with the President or Congress, to get men into snug offices and berths, but the power our priests wield is of another kind. Their influence is with God, and their power over evil spirits and all that prevents man's salvation. Christ had all power from the Eternal Father, and that same power is confided to the priests of our Church. 'All power is given to me in Heaven and Earth; as My Father sends me, so I send you.'"

"You don't mean to say you ever saw an instance of your priests exercising power over evil spirits, as Christ did while on earth, do you?"

"Yes, I do, many a time. One time when I

was on the river our boat, called the 'Chouteau,' put up for some repairs at Cape Girardeau, in Missouri, and while there, there was a great uproar in the town. A whole family, of the name of Starbuck, got possessed by evil spirits. They were all, at first, spiritual-rappers, and used to have meetings of table-turnings and fortune-telling. Finally, the spirits that they raised, they could not *lay*, and taking possession of the whole gang of them, they put them into horrid convulsions, grimaces and distortions, so that the whole city was gathered around to hear them *hollering*, screeching, cursing and smashing things generally. Well, it seemed that the devil, and his name was legion, had got into these people. Nothing else could torment them so fearfully. The preachers all came to pray over them and to read out of their old Bibles. But the devils only laughed at them, cursed them, told their secret sins in public, and knocked them down if they came near enough to the possessed people."

"Dear me, that was dreadful! and what happened next?"

"I will tell you. There was a small preacher, an Episcopalian, who came to try *his* hand at the expulsion of the devils, but they seized him by the neck and near throttled him to death, and then flung him ten or twelve yards into the middle of the road from the house, where he lay groaning till he was removed."

"Did you see these occurrences with your own eyes?"

"Yes, that I did, so help me—, but I must not swear, as I vowed to give up cursing and oaths, and am preparing to go to confession. Then the people's acquaintances recommended to send for the Catholic priests of the college. The priests came down to where the possessed people were. They sprinkled holy water, lighted blessed candles, and compelled the devils to tell what brought them there, and who they were, making them speak Latin, Greek, French, Dutch and several languages. Finally the priests ordered the possessed up to the Catholic Church, where, among a large crowd of 5,000 people, they expelled the devils from the possessed family, commanding them to go back to the regions below, and made the family as sound and natural as ever they were. The whole family became Catholics, and many of the Protestant citizens, seeing so much *power* exercised by priests, who could only get it from God, also submitted to the Catholic Church."

"That was really wonderful. I should, I guess, myself become a Catholic if I saw such power as that exercised by priests of the Catholic Church."

"I should think you would. I saw that then, as sure as I see you, and greater things than these I saw done by priests."

"No wonder, indeed, that you are attached to your priests. I wish our ministers had such power."

"But why need you believe what I tell you?

Did you not read in the papers last week—I know I did—that the same thing happened in Watertown, in the State of Wisconsin, within the present month?”

“Yes, I believe I read such an account in the *St. Paul Press*; but we do not believe one-half what we read in that paper. Those papers put in all sorts of stories to fill up space. And we regarded that as one of the stories of the *Press*.”

“I allow that that, and other papers, often state what is false, especially when they make money out of the falsehood. But, as the devil himself, though the father of lies, sometimes is compelled to speak the truth, so those lying newspapers sometimes tell the truth. And that is why I believe what they state about the people out of whom the devils were expelled, in Watertown, by the priests of that city. They could make no money by telling such an occurrence as that.”

“So this is the sort of power you mean when your people speak of the power of the clergy of the Church of Rome.”

“Yes, they have the power that God gave them when He sent his disciples to preach the gospel, giving them power over spirits and all adversaries, and making them the conquerors of the whole earth to the gospel of Jesus Christ. This power your preachers have not, nor do they pretend that they have it. On the contrary, they say that no such power exists now on earth. But the power

to get into office, to exercise political influence, to get money, to disseminate falsehood, this power they are ever aiming at, and if they succeed in attaining to that worldly power, they soon turn their backs on their pulpits, betray their spiritual charge, and renounce the gospel which they pretend to preach, for place and position in the State. There is as much difference between the power of our priesthood and the power that your ministers are after, as between the soul and body, angels and men, God and Satan, Heaven and Hell. May God forgive me for speaking of that bad place."

"Well, now, I am glad you made me these explanations. I never knew before what Catholics meant by the power of their priests. It's a wonder to me that your young boss, Mr. Ronay, if he believes as you do, would have exchanged his religion for the Methody, which claims no such power as you speak of."

"Madam, my young boss has no notion of joining the Methodists, or any other sect. He is only a little careless, like myself, while sowing his 'wild oats,' and waiting on the girls, among whom he is a great favorite. Wait till he is dying; then those who will live can see if he will have the courage to die outside the Church to whom God gave power over sin and devils. I'm very much mistaken if that young man will ever join any Church but the one he was baptized in. Your preachers are too sanguine on that point."

“I assure you I heard our minister pray for him, by name, several times, at our night services in meeting-house, and that all believe that it is through the Elder’s prayers young Ronay has been got to come over to the Methodists.”

“That old hypocrite, your Elder, may as well whistle jigs to a milestone as pray to have my boss, Mr. Mulroony, join his church. He will do nothing of the kind. It is only a story got up among the old maids of the town. The young man may be a foolish wild young man, as I allow he is. He could be nothing else from his attending singing-schools, quilting-matches, spelling-schools, donation parties, sociables, camp-meetings, and other places where he can have plenty of fun. But, it is one thing to be a bad Catholic, and another thing to be a pervert from Catholicity to any sect. I call myself a very bad Catholic ; but for all that, I would as soon cut my right arm off, or swing myself from a cross beam, at the end of a rope, as join any of their churches. I might do it through hypocrisy, but I could never do it sincerely.”

“If you, Mr. Mickey, be a bad Catholic, who seem to be so strict in observing the regulations of your Church, I would like to come across a good Catholic. Those must be very good indeed, who are better than you.”

“Indeed, ma’am, I am not only a bad Catholic, God help me, but perhaps the worst one in the world. If I was not a bad Catholic, I would not

have disgraced myself with what I done yesterday. I should rather have cut off my right hand than raise it as I did, to strike a fellow-creature; and besides, my employer, whom I ought to obey and love. But I hope I shall do penance for this bad act, as, with the help of God, I am going to the priest next Saturday to confess all my sins and to amend my life."

"Well, no, do tell; do you really confess to a priest all your sins? That is a thing I should not like to do, above all other things."

"Certainly, I confess all my sins of *thought, word and deed*, in order that I may deserve the pardon which our Lord has promised to all who repent and submit themselves to that authority to which, in His Church, He confided the power of forgiving sins, when he said, 'Whose sins ye forgive, they are forgiven.'"

"That is very hard to believe, for 'who can forgive sins but God?' does not the Bible say."

"None can forgive sins but God, except those into whose hands He committed the power. They were the Jews who spoke these words—'who can forgive sins but God?'" Our Lord, and those who believed in Him, said that the 'Son of man had power to forgive sins, and the people glorified God, who gave this *power to men*.'"

"Is it not God who makes the earth fruitful, causes our crops to grow, and everything to increase and multiply on the earth? and yet, unless

we labor, seed down the earth, and cultivate the soil, we can't have any crops. It is God gives us plentiful crops, yet without man's labor and ministry, as it were, the earth is comparatively barren. So, God forgives sins, but through the ministry and agency of men. God does all things in the Church, or His Spiritual Kingdom, but He exercises His power through men. What one does through an agent, he really does himself, but indirectly. It was the Lord who expelled the devils out of the bodies of those people that were possessed, but he appointed these priests as his agents and representatives in doing so."

"All what you say to me seems quite rational, and easy to be understood; but, as I never before heard those matters explained in this manner, I feel a little confused."

"I have no doubt you have been told to believe in the Lord Jesus, and that you will be saved. You have never been exhorted to fast, to do penance, to subdue your appetites, to renounce yourself, take up your cross and follow Jesus Christ. All you have been told is to believe He died for you, and that you will be saved. Now, if that be all that is needed, merely to believe that Christ died for us without the necessity of any act of self-denial, what is the use of having meeting-houses, or preachers, or camp-meetings, or any other religious exercises, when the belief of this one point will save the greatest sinner? The Catholic Church

insists on belief most lively and unwavering; but still, in addition, tells us to watch and pray, to fast and abstain, to give alms, to visit the sick, clothe the naked, practice humility, resist the inclinations of the flesh, and do penance; in a word, to practice all virtues, to avoid evil and do good. We have sacraments and sacrifices to aid us, the saints to assist us, and the church to confirm and strengthen us by being the channel of God's graces to our souls; and even then, with all these aids, we must work our salvation in 'fear and trembling.'"

"God help those who want most of these aids to salvation."

"Yes, I say, God help them. For, if the just will hardly be saved, what will become of the ungodly? But I must now go to my work. Excuse me if I said anything to displease you, ma'am."

"Oh, not at all. I shall be happy to hear you again. But one word more, and I am done. You say God forgives your sins through the ministry of the priests. Is it not better to go to God himself for forgiveness? As our elders say, is it not best to go to headquarters when we ask a favor of the Lord?"

"Why, then, when you are sick, do you send for a physician? Is it not God that can heal your body? Why not call on God and shut the door on your family physician? When the Lord displayed his power before Pharaoh, why did he not do so directly, without sending Moses as his minis-

ter? Why did the sea not overwhelm the hosts of Pharaoh till Moses stretched his wand over the waters and ordered them to return to their former bed? Why did not our Lord himself directly heal the ten lepers till he ordered them to go show themselves to the priests? Why, instead of appointing the twelve apostles to preach the gospel to all nations, did not God himself speak to the nations in a voice so powerful as to compel attention and obedience from all peoples? There is no sense in saying you go directly to God, or, as your preachers profanely state it, to headquarters, if you refuse to hear and obey the orders of those whom the Lord has placed in command. We must hear the Church, and she will tell us to do the will of God, for to her He said, 'As my Father sent me, I send you.'"

The old lady thanked Mickey again for his explanations, cordially pardoned his injury to her husband, and rose up from the conversation with him in admiration of his intelligence, and deeply regretting that one who seemed to know so much about his religion, and so rational and almost profound in his knowledge, as she judged, should be deformed by such an ungovernable temper and an exterior of such uncouthness.

"That man," she said to her daughter, a young woman of eighteen, "can talk like a preacher, and appears to know the Bible as well as the best of them, and yet he is only a river man, who earns his living by steamboating."

"That accounts, mother," remarked the young lady, "for his ugly temper. I can't bear him now, after what he has done to pa. I wish he was out of the house."

"You must forgive him, Carrie. It's his temper and his associations that are at fault, and not his mind. Did you notice how he shed tears when apologizing for what he'd done?"

"No, ma. Did he really cry? I was not present."

"Indeed he did, and more than once. And I noticed that he hardly touched his food since the unfortunate occurrence."

"Really! He may be sorry then for what he done?"

"Sorry? I guess he is sorry. Do not show him any disrespect."

"No, I shan't, if he shed tears."

"I assure you he did that, and abundantly too."





CHAPTER XXII.

THE GENTEEL IRISH-AMERICAN EXPLAINS HIS PRINCIPLES,
BUT IS REBUKED BY HIS MOTHER.

IN spite of the prudent reserve of his wife, the report regarding the assault on farmer Muggins, by Mickey Bocagh, got a very wide circulation. In the village of Brighton the slight injury he received was exaggerated into a severe fracture of his skull. In the county town, the report had it that the farmer was killed. In the large cities of the Northwest, the telegraph told of his having been shot by an Irishman, who burned his house over his carcass, to escape detection. In Chicago it was posted in large capital letters that a respectable American family were murdered by an Irish laborer, and their residence, after having been plundered, was burned. Farther East, in Boston and New York, the telegrams had it that several respectable American families were murdered by a party of Irishmen. Finally, in Harper's *Nasty Pictorials*, there was a hideous picture of a

party of drunken Irish Catholics, murdering a family of innocent American Methodist Protestants. And the empty-headed editors and scribes for the daily and weekly press, who were at their wit's ends, and biting their nails to the quick, for lack of matter to supply *copy* for their industrious compositors, found in this incident, in the house of an obscure farmer, in a remote country district, in the extreme Northwest, ample matter to employ their eloquent pens for a month at least. Out of such incidents are the materials supplied which go to build the insecure foundations of modern contemporary history.

In the olden time it was not so. Then, news travelled slowly, but it was more reliable. If it wanted the wings of lightning to travel with, it was surer, if slower, and less liable to the accidents that are certain to befall sooner or later those rash beings who affect too much familiarity with the thunders of Heaven.

"What a singular instance of intellectual activity and of the enterprise of modern times," exclaimed Mr. Patrick Mulroony one day, as he read the newspapers before the family circle, just as they were all sitting down to supper; "we have in just five days after the occurrence took place, an account in the city papers of your attack, Mickey, on the farmer Muggins. There is nothing can escape the vigilance of those newspaper men."

"It got into the papers, did it?" asked Mickey,

surprised, "I wonder how in the old Harry did the lying set get hold on it; I'll bet they added something to it, if it went through their hands at all."

"Well, not much, the paper says, only, that you fractured his skull, ha! ha! ha!"

"Me fracture his skull! Confound them, how could they say that, when I only hit him with my open hand? I would fracture the skulls of the lying cusses who printed that lie, if I could lay my hands on them, I promise you."

"Oh! ho! here is another account that states that you killed neighbor Muggins. Yes, I declare; and another telegram, further down, says you killed him and his wife and children, and then burned his house the conceal the evidence of your guilt."

"They don't say that, do they?" asked Mickey, dropping his knife and fork; "I guess you are 'gassing' now."

"No, not a bit of it. There, you can read for yourself," said Patrick, handing Mickey the paper.

"Well, well," exclaimed the river man, "I never again will work a month on land. They are all a parcel of lying scamps on land. Now, on the river, or the 'run,' though we are wet and cold, and work Sundays and holydays, and one gets lost now and again, yet we don't have no liars among us. I always thought the newspapers stated nothing but the truth. But here we see

that lies are as welcome to them as truth, and more welcome."

"Here is another version of it in Harper's Journal of Civilization. There you are, Mickey, represented as leading a body of drunken Irishmen to murder an innocent religious family. Oh, that is going a little too far with the joke."

"Joke, do you call it, Mr. Mulroony," exclaimed Mickey in rage; "if you call it a joke, to slander an honest man in that style, I do not think you can be much better than those lying folks who try to assassinate people in this devilish manner, by their lying telegrams."

"Oh, I don't mean that the report is given in the jocosier amusing columns of the paper. Indeed, I think it is given as a piece of serious news, and I regret very much that your little scrape got circulated in this aggravated form. When I say the 'joke' has gone too far, I mean that it becomes almost absurd on the face of it, and that people of reflection will refuse to give it credit. I advise you to keep cool. It will do you no good to get into such a passion about it."

"How can I help getting into a passion when I see myself denounced in all the papers of the country as an assassin? What will the captains on the river think, and the hands, when they read of such crimes by me, Mickey, who am known all the way from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Superior, and from the Hudson River to Omaha?"

"Oh, they won't believe it. They know you too well to suspect you of being guilty of any such crimes."

"I know they won't believe it, for the various editions of the story, in the different papers, contradict one another. But thousands will believe it, and the fair fame of Ireland, my native land, and the Catholic Church, will suffer from the blasphemies of those who know no better, but take all their information from the lying pictorials and sectarian newspapers. This is what troubles me most."

"I would not be troubled thus. Old Ireland and your old religion will survive these injurious rumors, I assure you. Take things cool."

"I know that very well, boss. I know I am bad enough, and I don't want to be represented worse than I am. But I know what I shall do. I shall visit the offices of those papers, beginning with St. Paul, that put those stories in circulation, and make them all take these stories back, or they shall feel the mettle of the knuckles of Mickey Bocagh."

"Indeed you may spare yourself the trouble. All these reports will be forgotten in ten days. And you may as well think of getting back into the tick every feather of a feather bed scattered before the wind on the prairie, as to get that report contradicted in all the newspapers in this great country. We live in an age of lightning progress, and would need to have a messenger of a speed

quicker than lightning to recall any news that once gets running on the electric wires."

After these remarks, Mickey got up from the table, took his hat, and bidding the old lady a hearty farewell, and desiring his wages to be paid to his mother, he quit his employer's house, and early next morning started for his old vocation on the steamboat.

A brief pause ensued, consequent on the sudden departure of the indignant river man, which was interrupted by Mrs. Mulroony addressing her son in the following words :

"My dear Pat, as I do not feel well this week, I desire you to go up to speak to Father John, our pastor, about the quarterly solemn services for the repose of your poor father's soul."

"Mother, I leave all these matters to you, as I have always done. I do not like to go near that Irish priest. He is entirely too sharp, too much of a critic, and altogether too harsh—I may as well say it as think it—to suit my notions. I would much rather be excused from going to see him."

"Why, my son, what do I hear you say? How can you have the assurance to speak disrespectfully of that accomplished gentleman? How can you say that he is too severe or harsh? Is he not the most mild and indulgent of confessors and directors of souls? Is he not ever ready to attend to all the calls that come to him, day or night, in the discharge of his duties? He may be harsh in

his manner, or tone of voice, but is he not severer towards himself in fasting and vigils, and labors, than to the meanest man in his congregation? When did you have an instance of his sharpness last? Was he severe on you, my boy, at your last Easter confession, which I hope you have not neglected?"

"He was sharp and severe on me, mother, on the night himself and McMahon were here on the occasion of attending at McBeth's dying bed. He snapped at me then, rebuking me openly, and on other occasions he has, I am told, censured me severely."

"Perhaps, my dear son, you deserved his rebuke. Ought not his heroic, charitable conduct on that terribly severe night when the snow was measured by yards in depth, going to attend a man who did not belong to his Church, in danger, I may say, of his own life—ought not that one example alone cause you to admire him as a heroic priest, a true pastor, and almost a martyr in the holy cause of Christ? You ought to admire Father John for this, if for nothing else. But you did not answer my question, whether or not you went to your Easter confession? I hope you have not neglected that solemn duty of your religion. Answer me candidly, as you used always to do. Did you perform your Easter duties as you used to do when I was able to be about to see that you did it?"

"Mother, I would rather you would not cate-

chise me on this subject. I think I am too old for such questions now. But, if you insist on it, I will not deny, but tell you candidly, that I have not troubled that priest for over a year, for the discharge of any religious duty. I do not like him. I have not gone to his tribunal, as it is called, for reasons that I cannot get over. If it was that I would be compelled to go, I should choose some other priest. But in my present feelings, I do not think I will trouble any priest soon."

"My dear child, your remarks give me indeed great pain. I am sorry, sorry to the heart, when you talk so. It is allowed on all hands, that our priest is a learned man, and thus fit to be a safe guide for souls. For a great saint, St. Liguori, says that learning is more desirable in a director than even piety without learning. Besides this, our priest is a man of vast experience and sincere piety, and I would consider myself very unfortunate indeed, if I could not esteem such a man. Oh, my son, I fear the company you have got into; in and from association with persons of that school you frequent, has ruined you!"

"Ruined me? Not at all. I never had finer prospects, mother. Don't you notice the many nice premiums I brought home to adorn your parlor, from the academy, and I have a fair chance to become County Superintendent of Schools in a year or two. My prospects are good and my profit sure, if I succeed in my honest ambition."

“I don’t speak of your profit as an office-holder, but of a *profit* far more desirable, that is, to gain a crown of immortal glory in heaven. And if you neglect your religious duties you surely forfeit these honors, and lose your soul.”

“Well, to be plain with you, mother dear, as I have ever been, I must tell you, that thinking as I do, and with feelings which I entertain towards your pious, learned and spirited priest, I cannot persuade myself to go to confession to him.”

“Well, then, there are other priests whom you can approach, and who may be more to your taste though few are so learned and experienced as our Father John. You have no objection, I hope, to go to these for confession. Or, you can go to the missionaries who are to be in the parish Church of Father St. Denys, that saintly man whom all admire and venerate, even the Protestants and others who are candid enough to honor virtue and heroism wherever they find them.”

“I do not think I will trouble any of those holy men for a while. I can see Catholics who go often to the sacraments, as bad and worse than the people who do not believe in or practice these ceremonies. Besides, as I do not commit any sins that I can reproach myself with, I think I have no great need of confession.”

“Oh, my son, my lost son,” said the pious matron, bursting into tears, “why do you talk so boldly and impiously. The day was, ere my heart

was hardened through grief and suffering, that I could weep rivers of tears at hearing such unchristian and unholy sentiments. How dare you judge those people you say you have seen acting ill after frequenting the holy sacraments? They might be far worse in their conduct did they not frequent them. Is it not rash and sinful in you to presume to judge of their condition in the sight of God? It is to God alone that the prerogative belongs, not even to angels, of judging what men are in his sight. And, as for you saying that you commit no sin, that is the height of presumption. Does not the scripture say that even the 'just man falls seven times a day?' Who can count the number of times that the sinner falls? O, may God forgive you this day, my poor lost son. And may his Divine Majesty save me from having to answer for those impious sentiments of my poor perverted boy."

"There it is, mother, always the same unpleasantness and scenes when you commence to speak about religion, duties and devotions. I often told you that these subjects are disagreeable, and should never be introduced outside the church or meeting-house. It makes it so disagreeable to me that I shun this house where I can have no amusement or pleasure, and spend most of my leisure hours where the subjects of religion, devotion or purity, never come up, except to be laughed at. Whereas, here at home, where I ought to have peace and

be let alone, it is all the time: 'When have you been at confession? How often to Mass? Did you do your penance? Have you kept the fasts?' and thousands other things so disagreeable to one to be all the time reminded of."

"My son, are not these subjects so disagreeable to you now, since you went into bad society, the principal topics that ought to be continually spoken of and remembered, and practised? I allow it is *disagreeable* to our human nature to meditate on eternal truths, to pray much or always, to fast and do penance. But does not our Lord say that those who neglect such exercises will eternally perish? But you go into society where these things are never spoken of unless to be mocked at! Do you think that good society for you who were baptized, trained and educated a Catholic? Who expects salvation through these practices alone which you hear ridiculed and laughed at among the wicked? I see now the fruit of the teaching of the academy. I see that to gain a little praise from foolish men, or from a desire of popularity, you have lost your faith. God send, it may stop here. But those who lose the faith soon after, by a divine judgment, also suffer shipwreck of their morals."

"No, mother, I hope I am not so far gone as you fear. If my morals were not correct I should not have been selected by a unanimous vote of the professors, trustees and pupils, to deliver the valedictory at the late exercises."

“What do you say. How can your morals or sentiments be good, honorable or proper, when I find you have been ashamed of your old honorable name, ‘Patrick Mulroony,’ and allowed it to be mutilated into ‘Paran M. Ronay.’ Do you count this an instance of a high moral sentiment?”

“Oh, that was done without my desire, in the first place, by the principal and professors. Then when it was adopted by the whole class and school, and even by the citizens of the county, I consented to the change on account of euphony!”

“What, ‘funny,’ do you say? I do not see anything ‘funny’ in Mulroony, but the change to ‘Ronay’ is not only funny but barbarous and absurd. You put ‘Paran’ in place of Patrick, that old royal name of the old Romans. Whereas Paran, as our learned priest told you, was nothing more than a Greek adverb or preposition. Ah, my dear Pat, he that offends in one thing becomes guilty of all. When you change your name, the change of your religion and principles are sure to come about soon. Besides, it shows a weakness and a silliness in men to conform to the ignorant innovations of their inferiors, that a man who does, or shows such weakness, may be put down as of no character. None can respect him long. He will soon be despised by all thinking men.”

“You are pretty severe on me, mother, but I shall not contend with you in reference to this matter. What appears very absurd and unreason-

able to you, for some cause that I cannot explain, seems to me to be the very reverse of what you designate them. Tastes differ, but we must not fall out with others because their feelings do not agree with ours," and so saying our genteel Irish-American stood up, bowed to his mother and retired.





CHAPTER XXIII.

*Et nunc omnis âger, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc froudent sylvae, nunc formoeissimus annus.*

Now every tree and plant its fruitful tribute yields,
Whether in orchards, woods, or cultivated fields.

“HELLO, what’s all those flags and music for so early this morning,” asked Mr. Smylie of the hotel-keeper, Mr. Broadhead, of the village of Brighton.

“They have been about all night marching, counter-marching and hollering, so that I have not been able to close my eyes for an hour since I retired at nine o’clock last evening.”

“Confound them, I too heard them all night. It is an excursion of the pupils and the teachers of the academy. I believe they are going all the way to Lake Minnetonka. They are having great preparations made for the trip, and it is got up by the Methodists who are intending to hold a three days’ camp-meeting in one of the islands of the lake. Here they come, you see, with wagons. Let’s see,

there are ten wagons, and as many flags and mottoes, and a band of music."

"I should think it was unwise to drag so many young people such a distance (it must be over thirty miles from here) over rough roads, too."

"It is scarcely that distance, and starting at this early hour, it is just quarter past four, they will reach there easily before noon. They will have a very pleasant trip if the weather holds fair, or no accidents happen."

"Yes, if no accidents happen, you may well add, for I never knew of any of these so-called religious *fêtes-champêtres*, as the French call them, come off without some accident. Either the weather suddenly changes, something breaks down, or somebody gets hurt. It is a common remark in our neighborhood, among the farmers, to say to their hands, 'hurry up now, boys, for we are going to have bad weather, for this is camp-meeting week.'"

"Yes, that is the general impression, even in this neighborhood also. I hope if anything unpleasant happens consequent on this excursion, it won't be rain, for we have had so much of that article already that any more would ruin the wheat and kill the corn crop altogether."

"There they go now, marching to the tune of 'Yankee Doodle.' Really, they look pretty, especially since the greatest number seem to be young ladies."

Prominent among the occupants of the first

vehicle were our young Irish-American friend, Mulroony, Professor Hoskey, and the female principal of the Academy, Miss Spoones, together with a dozen of the more advanced young female pupils. The second car or vehicle contained Elder Bull and his accomplished wife *number two*, and most of the married and middle aged members of the church. In the third car was Fribbler, surrounded by his admirers, mostly young men, prominent among whom were Riordan, Mulcahy, Hogan, Haley, and a few other teachers from the neighboring Irish settlements, who joined this excursion from love of fun and excitement, or a desire to fish, hunt or bathe. The day was delightful, the country over which they passed broken, uneven, and mostly uncultivated, but the scenery, though not striking, was varied and fantastic. Every tree, shrub and bramble, in the inimitable language of the immortal Mantuan bard, quoted at the head of this chapter, bloomed with a beauty and elegance peculiar to itself. The green, of course, was the color in which the charming taste of nature had decked herself, the gay but modest blossoms having retired and resigned their places to the more useful but less conspicuous fruits which now commenced to gather on the wild plum, apple and cherry trees. But in those green and abundant robes that covered the naked limbs of the giant veterans of the forest, after their long continued struggles against the blasts and blows of winter, there was an indescribable variety of color,

shade, contrast and perspective, that charmed the eye of the lover of nature, gladdened his heart, and afforded the most irresistible testimony to the infinite wealth, resources and benevolence of the Creator whose unerring pencil had painted them at a single stroke. The panoramic view from one of those elevated hills or a knoll east of the city of St. Paul was such as could not but delight the eye of the landscape artist, were he on the spot to transfer the scene to his canvas on this early morning in June. The country looks as if its surface was formed into its uniform irregularity by the labor of man or instincts of animals.

As young Mulcahy remarked, who was out from the old sod but two years, "these hillocks remind one of the fairy hills or mounds which we have in Ireland. It is very singular," he continued, "the whole country I see is so regularly laid out in those irregular hillocks, that, as Sir Walter Scott said of the county of Down, it reminds one of a quantity of eggs in a broad dish or sieve."

"No, Mulcahy," said Riordan, "but these here knolls are only the houses of muskrats, which, when the water that once covered this whole place drained off, then grew into these hills. I mean the rat houses, not the rats themselves."

"Yes," interposed Hogan, "or it might be that when the foundations of those knolls were laid, the rats were a great deal larger than they are now. Your rats in those days gone by might have been as large as an ox of our degenerate days."

"That might be, sure enough," added Mulcahy. "For if there were giants in those days, there must be gigantic animals too, otherwise those giants could not get enough to eat. What would a thousand prairie chickens be, or fifty deer, in the larder of one of those ancient Polyphemi, who, as Virgil tells us, made his supper on the carcass of a couple hundred sheep, and a cask or two of wine which Ulysses gave him to get him asleep, for he well knew his chance of escaping was all in his eye."

"I wonder if that old hero, Ulysses, was any relation of our great President," inquired the classical Elder Fribbler, who took great interest in this conversation between the Irish schoolmasters.

"Well, I am not sure whether or not old Ulysses was anything to our noble President. I should think not, for the old sage used to make presents, whereas your modern wise man is remarkable for receiving presents; ha, ha, ha. That's one great difference between the two men."

"These are remarks that should not be tolerated in reference to an immortal general; and, gentlemen, if they were made during the late rebellion, you would be all sent to Fort Warren or Fort Sneller," interrupted Elder Fribbler, with a frown.

"I agree with you, elder," said Haley, "we ought not to speak of politics or politicians during this excursion. We have topics plenty to employ our conversational powers; the scenery, the appearance of the surface of the land, the lakes, the

streams, the woods, the prairies, the fish, the game, and the inhabitants—”

“Who are not all fishes,” interrupted Riordan.

“All these things, gentlemen, are legitimate subjects for conversation, opinion, discussion, and controversy, leaving the sacred subject of religion for more solemn occasions, and discarding politics altogether, as containing the elements of discord. But while these are my sentiments, I must be candid and tell you, Elder Fribbler, that you are the very man who introduced politics, by asking the not very enlightened question, whether the Grecian Ulysses was as brave a man as our present great man of the same name at Washington.”

“That’s true,” answered all. “It is yourself who are to blame, if politics were introduced, Elder Fribbler.”

“Now let us turn our attention, gentlemen, to the elevating scenes around us, and, lifting our minds above, to the Author of all this pleasing variety and inexhaustible natural wealth of God’s footstool, we can then easily forget the little men who try, from availing themselves of the resources that spring from the ‘chapter of accidents,’ to puff themselves, like the frog in the fable, to enormous proportions. Such are your politicians, generally your preachers of discord, your disseminators of uncharitableness, and sowers of dissensions, political, religious and national. We are children of the same Divine Parent, some

froward and some faithful, and as we have inherited this broad, fertile earth, to use and enjoy it while in life, we ought to try and get along peaceably during the short time that remains for us as tenants of this house of clay. We see those mounds here of a race of beings of ages gone by; when so many ages shall have elapsed as have gone by since the foundation of those hillocks were laid, whether by men, animals, or the action of one or more of the elements, where will we be then, or what monuments will exist to enable men to conjecture that we ever walked or drove over these picturesque mounds?"

"Bravo, Haley," uttered many voices. "Those are the true sentiments. The first man that mentions politics or religion again, shall be put out on the road and left behind to plod his way back the best he can to the narrow circle of his bigoted clique."

"Come, give us a song, one of you boys," demanded a young American named McLaurin, who was himself a splendid singer.

"Begin yourself, McLaurin," cried many voices. "Sing 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled!'"

"I move we halt here on this beautiful hill overlooking yonder lake in the hollow, while Mac is giving his song," proposed Mulcahy.

"I second the motion," spoke many together.

Accordingly, on a knoll at a distance of about four miles east of St. Paul, the teams were brought

to a stand, and as on the summit of the knoll there was a space of about half an acre cleared of trees and stumps, most likely the site of an Indian camp in former times, the wagons were formed into a circle with the centre one containing the singers. This was the most elevated of the mounds or hills for miles around. There were scores of other smaller hills visible from its summit, and surrounding it like satellites, each diminishing in size till they reached the edge of the lake, where the little hills were not much larger than the constructions of the muskrats. Besides this remarkable gradation in the size of the knolls, each of them was crowned by bushes or trees of different species, or of varying color of foliage, owing to the soil or reflection of light which rendered the scene one of extraordinary beauty, very elevating to the imagination of the beholder. Some of the little hills were crowned by a cluster of dark pines, some had tufts of dark-green and trembling poplars, some were burdened by a heavy growth of gnarled black-oak, some adorned by the rich, soft, luxuriant tress-like foliage of the *Quercus alba*, white oak, while the bur-oak, the witch hazel, the sumac, the wild plum, and even the turmeric, adorned the lesser and lower knolls near the lake shore.

The spirited lyric of Robert Burns, "Scots wha hae" was sung in a very superior style on this charming spot, and re-echoed from a hundred surrounding hills, by McLaurin, who was encored again and

again, and ended by giving "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon," and "Annie Laurie."

Mulcahy and Haley were next severally called on for songs, whereupon the former gave "The Harp that once through Tara's Halls," and

"By that Lake whose gloomy shore,
Skylark never warbled o'er;
Where the cliff hangs high and steep,
Young St. Keven stole to sleep."

Both, we need scarcely mention, from Moore's immortal melodies. Mr. Haley sung "The wearing of the green," and also lines written by himself, on a late visit of his to Ireland, two years ago, on an unfortunate Fenian mission, which lines, as they are, of course, original, and to afford an idea of the qualifications of one of the characters of this story, we here give entire:

AN EXILE'S FAREWELL TO HIS NATIVE LAND.

Farewell to you, old Ireland,
I'll visit you no more,
I gladly quit thy trampled soil,
For America's free shore.

Thy smiling vales, and crystal streams,
And fields of emerald green,
No longer thrill thy exile's heart,
Since to the British Queen,
Thy dastard sons, by tyrant lords,
And slavish priests bow'd down,
Profanely pay that homage due,
To no foreign throne or crown.

I'd sooner as an exile seek,
 A home 'mid Afric's sands,
 Than come back again to view the woes,
 Of this most oppress'd of lands.

They spoke to me of improvement
 Among the peasantry,
 What that means in Saxon phrase,
 I plainly now can see.
 The tyrant lord no longer fears
 The peasant's fiery glance,
 And Irishmen no longer aid
 Expect from Spain or France,
 All Celtic games, and sports, and plays,
 Are out of fashion grown,
 And scarcely one the O' or Mac,
 Is bold enough to own.
 O, I'd sooner spend my weary days,
 In Indian camp or wood,
 Than come back to this improvement
 The Saxon calls so good.

Whole villages in ruins left,
 The only record keep,
 Of myriads of human beings
 Displaced by flocks of sheep.
 Two million mouths, by famine shut,
 Have ceased to cry for bread,
 While landlords, like hyenas,
 Dig up the murdered dead,
 With blasphemous assurance.

They even raise their hands
 To thank the Lord for this clearance
 Of their valuable lands.
 O, save me from this 'improvement'
 That pervades the Emerald Isle,
 And rather than again to see it,
 Let me die a sad exile.

Then, farewell to you, old Ireland,
Land of my nativity,
Tho' loving well I must resign thee
For that of liberty,
Where no tyrant lordling dare invade
The threshold of my home,
And free as wind o'er field and flood,
To fish, and hunt I roam ;
Where no church by law established
My conscience can annoy,
And all the rights of man untrammelled,
I freely can enjoy.
O, no earthly gifts shall tempt me,
In whatever clime I roam,
For a moment to forget thee,
My own Northwestern home !

Loud and long applause, in which even the Methodist preachers heartily joined, greeted this rude but spirited ode of Mr. Haley's own composition with sincere approbation. These songs had the effect of restoring the company to very good humor, and even on the sour face of Elder Fribbler, a smile, like a beam of sunshine through the chink of the wall of a dungeon, began to play, especially after he seconded the motion of Elder Bull that, as it was far advanced towards noon, and as they left home so early, they should all open their baskets and take lunch.

Then hitching their horses to the trunks of the trees on each side of the road, the party alighted, and retiring a little further from the highway, they all partook with evident appetite of the food, consisting of cold chicken, ham, smoked beef, pickled

tongue, roast turkey, cake, pie, tea, lemonade, wines, and all manner of baked meats and confectionery which generally forms the staple, always in great abundance, at American picnic parties, as they are called. And here it may not be out of place to remark that as there is no country in the world where the necessities and luxuries of life are as abundant and so generally within the reach of all men, as in the United States, so also, there are no people on earth, nor have we any record of any people, so hospitable as the American people. It used to be the boast of Ireland, that a stranger could travel all over it, a journey of three or four days, without a penny in his pocket and never want a meal of victuals or a night's lodgings. But more than this is true of America. A man may not have a dollar, and be reduced to ask charity, but even while a pauper and a beggar, he can sit down to as good a table as any man in the land, if his poverty is not the result of his own guilt.

In other countries the poor are, while they are reluctantly relieved, reminded of their poverty and their dependence on those who dole out to them their slim daily rations. But here, a man, if he is poor and compelled to make his poverty known, does not do so in the whining tone of a European beggar. But he demands his food as a right, and he is fed and clothed by his county, state or village, as if he were a pensioner of his country instead of a pauper. This is a juster title for an

American citizen to be proud of than even the flags of her stars and stripes, that are done homage to on every sea, and victorious on every battle-field over which they are unfurled.





CHAPTER XXIV.

"Fusi per harbam Implentur veteris Bacchi pinguisque farinae."

While all at ease o'er the soft grass recline,
They had their fill of venison pies and home-made wine !

WHEN the good things were abundantly heaped on the cloths spread to receive them, all hurriedly proceeded to help themselves, and for a while not a sound was heard except the clattering of dishes, the clinking of knives and forks, and the tinkling of glasses, and the popping reports of uncorking bottles. This last operation would have caused some trouble, for there was not a corkscrew in the parcels containing the viands, had it not been for Haley, who always carried one in his pocket since he was at college in Italy, where, on account of the abundance and cheapness of wine, a corkscrew was as indispensable to a man as a penknife.

"Give me you yet, Haley," said professor Hoskey, who had tried his penknife and broken two forks in his vain efforts to get at the contents of a large bottle of old Temperance bitters which Miss

Spoons had handed him for himself and young Mulroony, *alias* P. M. Ronay.

"Neow you see, ladies and gents, this here Irishman beats us native Americans all to pieces in his ingenuity and thoughtfulness. While we came off without thinking of such an instrument as a corkscrew, he carries one always in his pocket. Here Haley, take the first swaller out of this bottle. You deserve it, my boy."

"No, thank you, I never taste anything but the genuine juice of the grape."

"Why, man alive, this is better than any juice of the grape, for it was prepared and put up exclusively for us Sons of Temperance, some two years ago, by our accomplished and beautiful principal here, Miss Polly Spoones, was it not Miss?"

"Yes," answered the talented young lady, "but you made a mistake of three years in its age. That wine was prepared by me some five years ago, and it is only on very rare occasions that mother allows me to have a bottle for my friends. I present that bottle to you and my best friend, Mr. Ronay. That is for you both alone."

"Thanks, thanks, and unspeakable gratitude for your consideration. We shall keep it to ourselves, then. Come, Ronay, you happiest of men, oh, oh, it is delicious; come, hug that bottle to your lips and take a long and a strong pull out of it. May we never want such glorious temperance beverages, ha! ha! haw!"

“Indeed, it must be a good temperance drink Hoskey,” remarked Haley, “for you are becoming eloquent under its inspiration. It reminds me of an old classical remark of the king of lyric poetry:

‘Quem non fecundi calices fecere disertum’

From the inspiration of the foaming bowl,
E’en a fool may catch some nobleness of soul.

“That’s glorious, Haley; bully for you. I am sorry I am not like you, a classical scholar. But I don’t know that it makes much difference. I know a good many Latin roots, and as for the English branches from the highest problems of grammar to the concordances and theories of the higher mathematics, I am an A number one master of them, am I not, Miss Spoones? Did I not carry off all the premiums of the first class, while in your academy; am I not the most talented pupil you ever had, except our mutual friend Ronay, here?”

Loud laughter greeted this self-laudation of the professor, in which even the grave Miss Spoones had to grin for a moment. But, recovering her usual placidity she answered the professor by saying “Yes indeed, Professor, you were at the head of your class generally, and better than this, I must say you were very obedient to rules, and a most accommodating pupil.”

“I will stand up to acknowledge my gratitude to your ladyship, Miss Spoones, for that compliment. I want words to thank you, and if you could read my heart, there you would find engraved upon

its *tablets* in living letters, gratitude and fraternal love, for my most esteemed teacher, Miss Spoones. Let's all drink her health. Fill your cups, ladies, and glasses, gentlemen, and drink Miss Spoones, the accomplished principal of the academy, 'hip, hip, hurrah,' Miss Spoones."

"Ain't them nice temperance bitters, Haley?" remarked Riordan. "Hang me if Hoskey is not half drunk, and there is Mulroony dozing with his eyes half closed. Oh, what hypocrites."

"What matter, man? Is not that their profession, to be hypocrites and pretenders? proclaiming themselves temperance men, while they are quaffing bottles of bad colored whisky and setting themselves up for professors, while they talk of the *Problems* of Grammar. I allow, grammar is a problem and a mystery to them, and the concordances of mathematics. What illigant academies, as an Irish peasant would say, there must be where such men as Hoskey and Monsieur Ronay can get diplomas for graduation. But, mark you, they know the *roots*, if not the *branches*, of the sciences. I am already sick of this company, and have a great mind to return back."

"Nonsense, man, we will have great fun before we return."

"Hush, they will hear us. The Elder Bull is going to say something."

Cries of "Order, order, gentlemen; attention young ladies, while the Elder is speaking," proceeded from Miss Spoones.

“Ladies, gentlemen and brethren, I respect you all, cordially. I hope you enjoy this day, and this delightful society among neighbors and friends, as much as I do. We are seeking for pleasure, and this is the end and aim of all mankind. The young, the old, the healthy and feeble, the rich, the poor, all are in pursuit of pleasure, which is the great object of life here on earth. This delightful day affords us many sources of pleasure. We are cheerful, we are pleased, we are filled with good things, and by and by we shall enjoy other occasions of pleasure, more varied and satisfactory, when we shall have arrived at the beautiful lake, which is to be the terminus of this excursion. Let us, therefore, arise again and fall into line, and never halt again to-day, till we stand on the shores of Minnetonka.”

“That’s the best speech, because it is brief, I ever heard the Elder make,” remarked Riordan.

“Yes, it was *multum in parvo*, but, it seems to me, it smacked not a little of epicureanism,” replied Haley. “If pleasure, as he said, is the end and object of man’s existence, and all we do is done to reach that *summum bonum*, then away with your self-denial, abstinences, fasts, and penances. In fact, away with Christianity.”

“Well, I do not know if the Protestant sects profess this doctrine openly,” added Herbert, “but practically, they all teach the same thing. They ridicule the idea of atoning for sin, or pleasing

God by fasts, penances, or other austerities. They say God has no need of such things, and that austerities are rather offensive than pleasing to the Lord."

"Well, gentlemen," said Professor Hoskey, "I am as good a Catholic as any of you, descended from an old Catholic family, and yet I cannot see of what use fasts or penances are. I used to observe these things while father lived, but since I became my own master, I could not see it as he, the old man, did, and I gave all such things up; they were very inconvenient, very, indeed."

"You a Catholic, Hoskey?" asked Riordan. "You know you are a Mason, and cannot continue a member of a Church that excommunicates you and your society."

"You must be what we call in the old country a *Rum Catholic*, Hoskey, after refusing to accept the most essential parts of catholicity, namely, penance, mortification, and self-denial. I never suspected you to be a Catholic before, seeing you eating the pork and other meats this day, Wednesday in Ember week. Did you not know this was a fast day?"

"No, what could I know about it, who have not been in church for over three months, on account of that priest of yours at the Irish settlement pitching into secret societies? I could not listen to him, not I."

"Is not that his duty, Hoskey?" rejoined Rior-

dan. "If the cap does not fit you, why do you wear it? Are you not the scandal of the whole county by the way in which you run around from one meeting-house to another, to show your liberality, as it were, and to get yourself into office?"

"That's not so, Riordan; I say it's not so," said Hoskey, excitedly. "I cannot take no such remark."

"Then I am a liar," rejoined Riordan. "I will see you for these words before we return from Minnetonka. Mind, be prepared."

"Anywhere you wish, Riordan. I am ready to make good my words. I aint afraid of you, or no man."

"Be quiet, friends," interposed Haley. "The line is now formed, let each mount his proper vehicle. These holy men could not enjoy better sport than to see a duel between two so-called Catholics. Not a word more, advance."

Again the procession advanced at a brisk pace; the band played "Old John Brown's Body Lies Mouldering in the Tomb;" the broken, hilly country was soon passed over, and a bird's-eye view of the city of St. Paul, situated as it is in an elbow of the great father of waters, rose before the wondering gaze of the excursionists. There were few of the party who ever got a sight of the capital of Minnesota, or of any other city, and hence the delight and astonishment with which they viewed this city built, or rather having its foundation laid, in the

midst of a rugged wilderness, as if it owed its origin to enchantment, like the magic creations of the Arabian tales. It would seem as if the city was commenced before the site was determined on, and that spires of churches, palatial residences, expensive commercial structures, and commodious hotels, rose into imposing proportions, ere the streets were graded or the forests cleared off. Hence, from the principal street of the city, alive with the bustle of commerce, vast and *reserche*, you could, you would imagine, by one great leap, land yourself across the Mississippi, into a wild forest at the other side, the abode of hostile Indians or savage bears and wolves. There is no more striking instance of the rapid advancement of modern American civilization, for here the retreat of barbarism and uncouth nature was too slow for the lightning speed of our material progress, and both antagonistic forces had to encamp, as it were, on the same ground. It is to these principles, so universal and so much in contrast, that St. Paul owes those striking peculiarities that render it unrivalled as an example of rapid improvement and a centre of so much scenic attraction. St. Paul has attractions for all sorts of people. The religious are attracted by its glorious name; the feeble and infirm by the salubrity and purity of its climate; the romantic, and those loving nature, by its scenery; the learned by its Indian relics and traditions; and all the world admire the liberality,

hospitality and generosity of the citizens of this metropolis of the Northwest.

Our excursionists, however, notwithstanding their desire to see its broad streets and places of interest, had to pass it by, traversing merely its suburbs in their haste to reach their destination, Lake Minnetonka, in good season. Having crossed the crest of the hill that covers St. Paul and cuts off its view from the level country west of it, the party accelerated its speed over the champaign before them, and without delaying to visit interesting localities, or stopping to admire new and pleasing scenery, they continued in a steady gait for about three hours, when the charming prospect of Lake Minnetonka broke on their sight. At a first view from the shore it appears but of a very limited extent, but when surveyed from the upper deck of the steamer that disturbs its transparent waters, or from the summit of one of the bluffs which overlook its expanse, it will be seen to be of very great extent, as well as the most beautiful lake in the Northwest. There was not a breath of air astir on the evening of the arrival of our party, and all its surroundings, the islands, the bold promontories, the trees of the forests, the atmosphere, the flocks of aquatic birds, swans, cranes, geese and ducks, nay, the very fish, could be seen through this clear water, all, as well as the waters themselves, seemed to be asleep, or enjoying a most remarkable and calm repose. Then again, the shadows of the cliffs and numerous islands

were mirrored on the surface of the clear, cold element, and the various colors and shades, from the reflection of the light of the declining sun, added an indescribable charm to the ordinary beauties of this magnificent sheet of water. Astonishment bordering on bewilderment at first held the spectators spell-bound and mute admirers of the ravishing scenery presented to their view. At length, Mr. Haley broke silence by remarking to his companions, "'Tis a charming and a bright scene, this lake and its scenery. It may be called the Killarney of the Northwest. I assure you, gentlemen," he continued, "there is more than one point of resemblance between the two lakes. In the remarkable transparency of its water, in the number and size of its islands, as well as the inspiration of its romantic scenery, your Minnetonka reproduces many of the charms of Killarney. There is also, I understand, the deer, which is often seen swimming through its waves. All you want is the purple mountains such as Mangerton, the Eagle's Nest, the old mediæval castles, the elegant demesnes, and the hounds to hunt the deer, with echoes and music of an Irish bugler, and the witty Irish guides—if you had all these, your Minnetonka would be a second Killarney."

"Killarney, eh?" asked Elder Bull. "That is one of the lakes of Scotland or North Britain, is it not?"

"No sir. It is rather a lake in the south of

Ireland, and now allowed on all hands to be the most beautiful lake in Europe, superior to the lakes of Geneva, or Como, in Italy. I wonder at a man, of what we called one of the learned professions, not to be posted regarding the situation, at least, of Killarney."

The learned Elder did not hear, or pretended not to hear, the remark of the Irish schoolmaster, and as all were summoned to supper at one of the hotels at Wayzata, the entire party proceeded in a body to where it was prepared.





CHAPTER XXV.

THIS CHAPTER SHOWS THAT ELDER REDTOP IS STILL IN TROUBLE.

WHILE the members of the academic institute at Brighton, including the faculty, trustees, the pupils and invited guests, were off to Lake Minnetonka in pursuit of pleasure, religion, game, fish and fun, there was another excursion, which a gentleman we have too long neglected, made, not to the country on pleasure but, to the city on business, and business, too, of vital importance to his welfare. This individual was no other than Elder Redtop, who, smarting under the general contempt into which he had fallen in public estimation, since his disgraceful encounter with the medium, as well as the coldness of his receptions at the family residence of Miss Spoones, had resolved to make one more grand effort to secure the heart and fortune of his intended, let it cost what it would. "I have lost considerable cash already," he muttered

to himself in soliloquy, "in consulting clairvoyants and fortune-tellers in reference to this young lady, who, though she is the plague of my life, yet, I cannot be happy without her, and I will lose a few dollars more, though I earned it hard, or even my life I will sacrifice before I will see her the wife of that young Irish scamp, Ronay, on whom I am told she dotes. Confound and consarn the scoundrel, if he has a large farm, and is rich, and knows a little more nor me, what of that? Am I not a minister of the Gospel, who was converted when I was fifteen years old, whereas my rival is a Papist, an idolater, and an Irish Catholic! I cannot see what in tarnation has come across Polly, my Polly, to take a fancy to such a miserable cuss as this Ronay, or Mulrooney, as the Irish call him, when she could have me any day, a million times a better man, every way you take me, than that consarned Papist. But, the dogoned feller won't have her as easy as he thinks; I will disappoint him, you bet." And after so saying, exchanging his steel-gray frock coat for a white linen duster, and his heavy silk old-fashioned stovepipe hat for a light faded straw hat, he started on foot for the city.

Elder Redtop, since he fell into disgrace in the neighborhood of Brighton, managed to make out a precarious livelihood by several agencies which he took on himself to manage. He was insurance agent for the Roaring River Mutual Insurance

Company, travelling agent for five sewing, and two knitting machines; commissioner for nine different patent churns, and an indefinite number of hair renewers, toilet soaps, coloring and depilatory washes for the hair, not to speak of an unfailing cement for mending old broken crockery, and a valuable recipe for making soft soap, which his own genius invented. He was a regular walking magazine, or bazaar of inventions, recipes, washes, anodynes, pain-killers, emulsions, dyes, cosmetics, patent implements, from a reaper to a fine needle threader, and remedies of all descriptions. If he had been crossed or balked in one profession, mainly that of Evangelist, it was only to open the door of his ambition to a thousand others as pleasant, if not as lucrative, as the former. Like the fabled Hydra, when one head or source of gain was cut off, an indefinite number of other sources of equal gain sprung up, and the genius of Redtop turned them all to advantage. Besides these different occupations, he never resigned his original profession of Preacher of the Gospel. Not at all. No secular business which he engaged in as yet, promised as much as this sacred calling. The time might come when something would offer,—for instance, a government office,—for which he would readily barter his calling as minister. But, up to this time, he considered the preaching business the best card in his hand. Hence, when he went outside the range of the circulation of the unfavorable

reports about him, in and around Brighton, he *supplied*, for other ministers, and preached with his usual unction and vim *against* popery or some other creed. His *forte* was preaching *against* something; he never considered it necessary to explain his own creed, or to recommend any moral maxim or practice, perhaps because he had none to recommend. He also held meetings in schoolhouses, and in private houses, in districts where there were no local preachers, and gave out for apology for his following petty agencies, instead of his calling as a preacher, that his health failed, and the doctors recommended him to give up preaching for a time and to travel a good deal on foot in order to recover his former health. There was a good deal of sympathy manifested in his regard, by widows and old maids, and to the question always asked at his first introduction wherever he went, if he had "a wife and family," he candidly answered, "no, but that he was engaged to be married to an accomplished young lady for years past, but who, it seemed, of late, manifested an inclination to back out from the engagement on account of the unfavorable change in his health and circumstances."

"Shame, shame," was the usual response to the minister's melancholy tale, from widows and old maids. That heartless lady, they said, ought to be excommunicated, as the *venerable* John Wesley had excommunicated a lady who refused to be his wife one time in Georgia.

"Why did she not marry you first?" said a pious farmer's wife; "and then, if your health would not mend, or you and she could not pull along together amicably, then ye might get divorced decently and honorably. That would be the way to do it."

Elder Redtop thought so too, but whatever were his sentiments about the divorce business, with regard to the marriage (his marriage to Miss Polly Spoones), he was determined to accomplish *that*, let it cost what it would. Ay, if he had to sacrifice all he could make in five years by his numerous agencies, and he expected that would be a big pile, he was determined to wed Miss Spoones, and disappoint that Irish chap, Paran M. Ronay.

With this end in view, he arrived at the city the same day that the excursionists reached Minnetonka, and without going to a hotel, or taking any nourishment, not even a glass of small beer, or waiting to brush the dust off his hat, boots and pantaloons, he made his way to the well known den or shanty of Bill Skim, the famous colored fortune-teller. He found the ferocious-looking darkey enveloped in his greasy habiliments, and surrounded by his half-dozen cur-dogs, which were his only companions. They were all in a profound sleep, dogs and master, and never moved or barked till the pious Elder was within the mouth of the cave-like abode of those animals.

Upon his touching the colored *brudder* by his shoulder, to wake him up, the half-dozen canine little animals rushed at his reverence at once, and it was not without some difficulty that he saved himself from injury with his umbrella. When the old man woke up, however, a growl from him caused them all to be off into a darker part of the den than where their master gave audiences.

Both parties recognized one another at a glance, for this was not the first time that they had met, and the colored man, placing on its legs an old cane-bottomed arm-chair, against the back of which he reclined over a dirty bit of carpet, invited his visitor to be seated, by saying in a voice of fierce gravity, "Take a cheer, and be seated."

"Thank you, I will, for I am tired after my smart walk of eight or ten miles."

"Why, you didn't walk that much this morning, did you, eh?"

"Yes, I did, and more too, for I made a circuit of some four miles out of my way to leave some of my magic hair-dye to Elder Squeakes' lady, and some of my unfailing cement, for dishes and door knobs, at Mr. Simon Brooks."

"Dear me, you are a great man for business. But you seem very troubled this morning, I perceive. Can I do anything for you, eh?"

"I hope you can help me a little. Is there anybody within hearing? It's on very private and delicate affairs I come to see you to-day, Bill."

"I know it. Before you kim in, reverence, I seed you in my dreams. I read your heart. Did you not find me in a snooze, eh? I can tell you all about it. It's a tender subject, a love affair, is it not, eh? ha! ha! ha!" grinned the negro.

"Yes, but you did not tell me if there were any listeners who could hear us."

"Bress you, man, no, not one, only my dogs. These are my only family, and they don't tell no tales. They are not gabby. No, not a word or even a bark will they utter when I look at 'em. The best trained curs in the 'orld. No tell-tales to them. They can *wag tails*, but tell a tale, never; he! he! he! Now, boss, I hope you are satisfied."

"Yes, then I had best tell you the trouble I am in."

"Oh, I know it. She is going to leave you, aint she?"

"Just let me explain. This young lady, Miss Spoones, and I have been engaged for years to be married. But she put off the wedding for one reason or another until now a young Irish fellow, who came to the neighborhood, I wish he had been shot first—"

"Shot? no, no, that's too dangerous, make too loud a report. Best give him a pill. Something to take him off quiet, do you mind, eh? I could fix it neat for you for a small sum."

"Please do not interrupt me till I have explained all to you. She has got this Irish lad in her eye

now, and they say they are engaged. Could you not prepare a powder to cause her to change her mind? or if I sent her here to you, give her such advice and warning against that Irish lad as would cause her to give him up and have me?"

"Oh, I see now what you are after. I can do the very thing you ask to a T. But afore we proceed any farther please deposit my consulting fee of one dollar, and then we can talk about business. I have a bottle here filled of spiritualist water, that never lessens, or dries up, or gets riley, and when I look through that water in the bottle, (that water came from Africa, brought by my grandfather who was a slave to General Washington,) do you mind that, I look into that bottle. I can tell all future things, every one. Indeed I can."

"Here is your dollar, Bill Skim," replied Redtop, "and there are many more bills, five times its amount in this pocket-book, a part of which will be yours if you do the fair thing with me."

"Fair thing, eh? Why I's the fairest critter in the 'orld. No man fairer. One of them dogs there is not honestest nor fairer, nor surer, nor straighter than Bill Skim. Thank you, master, for your money. Now open your mind, and I'm the man to relieve you ebery way you can be reliebed. Ain't this honest, eh?"

"Yes. This is what I want you to do next. When my sweetheart, Miss Spoones, comes here, she may come in disguise, not willing to tell her

name for fear of exposure. But you can know her by a slight cock or squint in her left eye, but that does not hurt her beauty not a mite. She is as fair as Juno. You tell her that the fates have decreed her to be my wife. Warn her against a young fellow whom she now admires. Describe me to her; I hope you won't forget my appearance. Take a good look at me."

"Ha! ha! oh no, boss, I can describe you to a line. No mistaking your noble phiz. Never saw a nobler face! Then there is your hair, so like gold, and your eyebrows too, then your lips, nose and mouth. Can't forget you, boss, ha, ha, ha."

"Well, tell the young lady all things good about me, and make her give up that young fellow. I fear it won't be any easy job to do, for they are off together to an excursion just now, and never invited me. Who knows what may happen before they get back. They may get married."

"Never fear. I shall do all this. You send me the lady and if I don't purvert her against that young fellow, never give Bill Skim a dollar again. I shall do it; I shall do it sure."

"You think you can, do you? Well then, here is another dollar for your trouble, and if you succeed, I shall make it a V, a five dollar bill. Indeed I will, and more too. Now you understand me."

"Indeed I do, perfectly. I shall do all you say, and more. Now let me look again into my

bottle, oh, I tell you, boss, you are the happy man ; you will have that lady for a wife, shall raise a family by her, she shall die, and you shall live to enjoy all the property, and marry again, a rich widow, so that you shall be a very rich man."

"Shall I continue at preaching all the time?"

"No, sir. You shall give up that profession, become a farmer first, then a merchant, and after that a manufacturer, till you become awful wealthy. Don't you believe me, eh?"

"Well, I do, or would be anxious to believe all that you say, for I think I have capacity for all this luck you point out for me. And my own ideas run in the same channel you predict for me. I know you can tell the future if you have a mind to. You told me some truth which all came to pass, before, and when Squire Muggins lost his horses you told him where they would be found, they were."

"Yes, I never tells nofing but the real truth. I can't tell no lies, no more than the dogs can tattle. I only speaks what the Lor' shows me through this ere bottle, that's all, indeed."

"It must be a wonderful bottle, that's sure. Could I know future things if I got a look at it, or what would you take to let me look and see with my own eyes this good fortune you promise me?"

"Bress your heart, Massa, you could not see

nofing. No, not a stem. Besides, you may lose your eyesight, never to get it back. This bottle is of no use 'cept to those who are in the mysteries of Voodooism, of which I am head man in the Nor' country."

"Oh, that's it, eh? Then, if there was any danger to my eyes (for mine are pretty good ones), I would not want to look through it, by no means. No, I believe I have no more to ask you, but keep the main thing in view. Bring things about so that I may visit you again rejoicing. Good day, friend."

"Leave that to me. Good day," returned the colored man as he left, and then winking at his cur-dogs, the squad of them set up such a barking, grinning, snarling and bow-wowling as to make it impossible for the Elder to hear the fit of roaring laughter into which the negro fell immediately after he turned his back on his den. "By the throne of Mumbo Jumbo," he said, "these white men, and especially the religious portion of them, are the biggest fools in creation. They come to consult me into this stinking hole for knowledge, while they themselves, pretend to know all things. They pretend to teach the way to heaven, and yet they can't take one step in the affairs of life without making the shabbiest blunders in the world. But what cares Bill Skim? Has he not his bag of shining silver, getting daily heavier and heavier, and though he pretends to be a beggar, as he pre-

tends to know of the future, will he not be able to return to Africa, and set up there for King, where, perhaps, white men will come to pay him homage, ha! ha! ha! Oh, what a glorious time we shall have of it, when we shall drive out in a carriage with white servants in livery to attend us. Come, my curs, guard this shanty till I return, for I am dry and must have some beer, to drink that pious Elder's health."

The cur-dogs assumed their usual places, and there was no fear while under their guard, that any person would dare to invade his threshold till his return with his keg of ale. Scenes like those described above are such as have occurred, and do daily occur, in very many places in the United States. There is not a city, nor scarcely a village, without its male or female fortune-tellers, white or black, and their reception-rooms are generally very liberally patronized by people who profess to be far ahead in knowledge and enlightenment of those numerous pretenders to the gift of foresight, or in the knowledge of futurity. And not only are such seers numerous, and well-patronized by all classes of the community, but the acquisition of wealth and independence by such barefaced imposition, is not counted disgraceful, nor are those who succeed in accumulating fortunes thereby, cut off or banned from the intercourse of what may be called respectable society. Instance the case of Miss Skinner.

Who can be more popular in the community and in the higher political circles in Washington and New York, than Miss Tennie C. Claflin and Victoria Woodhull, who aim at the office of President of the United States, (and if matters continue as they have for a dozen years past, they will get these offices). And yet they were both of them for years common fortune-tellers, who earned their iniquitous wages by an imposition not a bit more respectable than the way Bill Skim earned his wages.

Those ex-fortune-tellers are now bankers in New York, and their money offices are daily crowded by merchant princes from all the principal cities, desiring to be honored by holding commercial relations, at least, with those ex-fortune-tellers and seeming female impostors. Why should we censure the ignorant black man, the brown gypsy, the red Indian, or the cream-colored Asiatic, for the practice of those arts of imposition and legerdemain, when we pardon the like tricks of the same nature, but carried on in a more wholesale scale, by members of our own advanced, enlightened and godly Anglo-Saxon race of people? If Bill Skim, surrounded by his half-dozen cur-dogs, so trained as to be ever ready to obey him, is an object of horror to us, in his filthy den in the purlieus of Frogtown, how much more ought we to abhor Miss Tennie C. Claflin, and her dozens of admirers, dancing attendance around her boudoirs,

with the subserviency of well-whipped spaniels? Both artists are of the same profession, have the same end in view, namely, by deception and fraud, to make money; they only differ in degree, and the difference, such as it is, is in favor of the black man and his canine companions, and adverse to the clairvoyant fortune-tellers, bankers and millionaires, and their patrons, associate retainers and admirers, *et hoc genus omne*.





CHAPTER XXVI.

SECOND DAY'S AMUSEMENTS AT LAKE MINETONKA.

THE weather was delightful during the time our excursionists remained at Minnetonka, the continued and disagreeable wet period of the past two months giving place to a time of genial warmth and charming serenity of the atmosphere, though the sun was most of the time overclouded. There could be no more favorable weather for fishing and fowling, and accordingly, our Celtic portion of the excursionists improved the opportunity they enjoyed of catching quite a number of splendid trout. Mulcahy, who was a Limerick man, had any quantity of artificial flies, and it was agreed among the disciples of Walton, according to the rules of genuine sportsmen, that nothing but flies should be used, and those on a single hair, or "gut," to entice the finny denizens of the deep from their cool retreats beneath the waters. There were crowds of persons all over the lake, with nets, spears and clumsy baits, rapidly filling boats with

heaps of magnificent fishes, but our *knot* of Irish-Americans were scientific anglers, and disdained to haul in a single trout unless hooked "*secundum artem*." They also fished from the shore, as more favorable to the *flies* over the water, and affording the only chance of displaying the nicest part of the art of angling in working the hooked fish in such a manner as to render it a helpless captive at the feet of the angler, on the sandy beach. It is in the manner in which the fish is brought to shore, and not in the quantity that is killed of it, that the real pleasure of the innocent art of angling consists. When our anglers returned to camp on the evening of the first day's fishing, they had on an average twenty-five large trout each, as the spoils of their victorious art. There were many other parties on the lake on boats and rafts who could show cartloads of fish as the fruit of their day's labor, but such parties fished for gain; to make money and not sport was the object they had in view, and their manner of taking the fish would render them in other communities amenable to laws enacted against the wanton destruction of this interesting species of game.

The quantity of fish brought to camp, not without difficulty, from their weight, was sufficient to supply all the members of the excursion with wholesome food for several days, and accordingly under the cooking skill of "Larry," a raftman who made one of the party, fifteen or twenty large trout were soon prepared, cooked and placed on

the rustic board, over snow-white napkins and table-cloths, in the largest tent of our party. The subject of angling and its accomplishments formed the topic of general conversation, and all the science of artificial fly-making, single hair lines with ashen rods, and reels and rings to wind and pay out the lines, inhauling the hooked fish to dry land, had to be explained over and over again by Mulcahy. And as the young ladies were not satisfied with descriptions merely, without seeing the theory of the art illustrated by experiment—a general feeling among young American ladies on theoretical subjects—the entire party, after having refreshed themselves with this delicious food, moved in a body to the lake shore to witness the practical performance of an art, the very description of which created so much interest among the entire party.

Accordingly, Mulcahy, Hogan, and Haley, unwound their fishing rods, loosened their line reels, attached their flies, and flung them with a whistling noise over the calm surface of the waters. At the second cast of the line, Mulcahy hooked a large five pound trout, which, finding itself entangled in the barb, attempted to rush to the bottom, but the angler held its head above the water, which it lashed furiously with its tail, creating quite a large bubble of foam, and disturbing the water in a large circle around an area of several hundred yards.

There was lively excitement among the by-

standers, especially the female portion of them, some of them crying, "Why don't you haul him in?" others, "Oh, it's cruel to keep the poor fish in pain so long," while some ran to seize the line to drag the fish to shore, saying, "Let *me* bring him in."

The angler, however, resisted all these unprofessional hints, and continued to play with the noble fish for about ten minutes, until he became exhausted, and was drawn with facility almost dead on the beach.

"There was then quite a rush of persons among the girls anxious to seize on the prize, which was the first they had ever seen caught in that scientific style. A Miss M'Clearen, however, a noble-looking Scotch girl, was fortunate in seizing and claiming the speckled prize.

Hogan and Haley after a while succeeded in hooking very nice trout, so that, after a couple of hours spent at this amusement, there were fish enough caught to last for a week, if needed, and most of the young ladies had one each.

The hunters, or fowlers, as they should be called, had not as much success as the anglers, and consisted of Prof. Hoskey, McLauren, Mulrooney, alias Ronay, son of Elder Bull, called Spike, and half-a-dozen other young men from the village. They shot and wounded a deer, but failed to come up with her, owing to the want of dogs, but they succeeded in shooting some fine ducks, a few wild

geese, and a splendid swan. These specimens of their skill, however, were more for ornament than use, as the season had not yet arrived for these birds to be fit for use on the table. There was one thing which the hunters brought back, which they had not on their departure, and that was a sharp appetite, which soon manifested its voracity on the quantity of fish, cake, home-made wine, and other beverages, which disappeared before them.

Professor Hoskey was especially eloquent in praise of this "almighty fine fish," which he pitched into in gigantic style, and washed down with a couple of bottles of the old currant of Miss Spoones. Ronay, alias Mulrooney, was more of a silent worker than the frothy professor, but did fair justice to the good things which his *intended* set before him.

"I never did see such splendid fish. I was often at the Lake Como, near St. Paul, and even went once to the famous Kennikenic, all the way over at the other side of Wisconsin," said Hoskey, "but this appears to be ahead of all creation for trout. What sort of bait did you *catch* those fish with, gents?" he added, addressing Mulcahy and his fellow-anglers.

"We did not use baits at all."

"What! you didn't use no baits, you don't tell me?"

"No, I don't tell you we *didn't use no baits*; but I said I used no baits," replied Mulcahy with emphasis on the two negatives.

"Well then, what else did you use? You don't say you caught them with the bare hook, do you?"

"No, I don't say that either. I used a fly in catching these fish."

"A fly? that's more nor I ever heard afore. Where did you get the flies, or how did you catch them to put on the hook?"

"I used artificial flies. Did you ever see fishing-flies? There are a few," he said, opening his pocket-book, which was literally lined with very beautifully constructed flies of all sizes, from that of a humming bird, to be put on for a salmon, to a *midge*, and of all shades and colors, the beautiful manufacture of his own skilful hands.

"Why, where in the world did you get all these natural curiosities?" asked the professor.

"I made them with my own hands. You see the manner in which I let my nails grow in order that I could handle such delicate materials," he said, exhibiting his finger nails, all delicately formed to sharp points, and capable of handling the fine material of silk, down, feathers, and delicate hairs, that go to form the perfect fishing-fly.

"Really that is a nice art," said Elder Bull. "I did not think they were so ingenious in the old country as to be able so perfectly to *counterfeit* the natural fly."

"Yes, they are, though rather backward in other arts,—for example, in counterfeiting a bank

note,—adepts in the more innocent art of counterfeiting flies, as you call it, so as to deceive fishes. I believe my countrymen have not yet progressed so far as to make base currency pass for the genuine."

"Indeed it must be allowed that they are a non-progressive people, your countrymen. The people are backward in education, are they not?—have no schools, or only a few. Does not the Roman Church influence the people in that backwardness by discouraging popular education, eh?"

"You labor under a very erroneous impression, Elder, in two points. Firstly, the Irish are not backward, but very forward in education, according to the opportunities they have had since they have been allowed schools at all. I allow they have not yet advanced as so many of our adopted country people here have; they have not been able to make counterfeit bank notes. But in all the legitimate branches of education, in medicine, law, and the pulpit, and bar, who can compete with our men at home? We have old Cullen, of Edinburgh, an Irishman, the Father of English medical science, Churchill, and Sir Robert Kane, in medicine; O'Connell, Curran, Grattan, Sheridan, and Burke, as orators and statesmen; Dr. Doyle, O'Leary, Kearny, and Cahill, in the pulpit, while, according to the London *Lancet*, there are more successful candidates at the Government examinations for situations in the army and navy, from Ireland, by far, than from England, Wales and Scotland."

"Indeed! I confess I am not well posted on this matter, and only take my data from our religious press."

"These are very uncertain sources of knowledge—

"Errors like straws upon the surface flow,
Those who would find pearls must dive below,"

said the poet.

"I perceive, Elder," continued Haley, "that you are not well posted. Hence, if I were in your shoes, I would not be so apt to make assertions when I was not sure of my data. You talk of this great country being ahead of all others in the inventive genius of her citizens. I allow that there is a good deal of energetic talent displayed by many of our citizens. But don't you think much of this is imitative and borrowed from natives of other countries? Fulton, who set the first steamboat afloat on your rivers; Ericsson, who taught you how to construct floating batteries; Gordon Bennett, who showed you how to make newspapers, and General Jackson, who taught you how to whip the English without foreign aid. All these, and many more I could name, derived their genius and origin from those old countries you despise."

"Oh, I guess not, the steam and the telegraph belong to our countrymen for sure. Don't you fall into a slight mistake in what you say?"

"I doubt very much, or rather I am positive, that all belonging to telegraphy, except, perhaps, the

poles, that is to say electricity and the properties of the magnet were known centuries before Franklin sent up his kite, or Morse stretched a yard of wire. And as for the power of steam, that was probably known to the ancient Romans, who, we have proof, had news of a battle fought and gained, at a distance of fifteen hundred miles, an hour after it was fought. Do you think they had not some rapid manner of communicating to and from the armies? We know that Archimedes was able to lift up into the air and destroy the heavy transports of the Roman General in the Bay of Syracuse in Sicily. Do you suppose he was ignorant of the force of steam, or that any of the forces of nature now in use, as utilized by mechanism, were secrets to his transcendent genius?

“The ancients excelled the moderns in poetry, mathematics, architecture, music, painting, statuary and philosophy; for the world will never know a second Aristotle. Do you suppose they were behind us in the mechanical arts? I allow that, in two *great* inventions, perhaps, our country carries off the palm, namely, in the sewing and knitting machines! But, in the old times, they used not to wear any stockings, and but a few of them wore breeches; so they did not need those useful modern inventions. In bringing to perfection sartorial machines, as well as in perfecting machines for making wooden nutmegs, I confess,” he added jocosely, “Yankee genius can carry off the prizes

at all the industrial fairs in the world. In this sense I confess we of Ireland are *backward* and behind the age."

"To the point, to the point," interrupted young Ronay, alias Mulroony, who was on fire to have his say in the amusing argument between Haley and the Elder. "As I understand the discussion, it stands thus: The Elder stated that the old country was behind the age in education, not alone in the rear as regards inventions, but in book learning, newspapers, lack of schools, and other evidences of enlightened progress, while Mr. Haley maintains the contrary to be the fact. Well, is there any need of argument to establish the almost self-evidence of the Elder's proposition? A few statistics are sufficient to show the facts against the old country, and especially Ireland. Are there not hundreds of daily newspapers in the United States, and is not the circulation of one of them, the *Herald*, *Times*, or *Tribune*, more than that of all the papers in Ireland put together?" Applause from the ladies greeted this first forcible speech of young Ronay.

"Allow me to interrupt you," rejoined Haley; "your argument is plausible, but proves too much. Do you forget that the population of these United States is eight times that of Ireland? How then could there be as many newspapers read in the one country as in the other? But you are incorrect in stating the point at issue. I did not say that

there were as many newspapers, books or schools in the old country as there are here, even among an equal population. But I said, and stick to it, that the Irish people are not uneducated. I don't care about the number of books or newspapers. Literature would not lose much, if all the books printed in English in the last three hundred years were burned. We have too many worthless books, too many badly-conducted papers. If all the books in the world, except Homer, the Bible, Shakespeare and St. Thomas, met the fate of the Alexandrian library, I do not think poetry, religion or philosophy would suffer an irreparable loss. As for eloquence, that does not depend on book learning, for some of the most eloquent speeches ever delivered were uttered by men ignorant of letters. The Irish people, even when they could not have school,—for schoolmaster and traitor were synonymous terms in English Protestant penal laws,—still had education. They learned their prayers by rote. They studied, and resolved the difficult problems, of allegiance to God and fidelity to their religion, and to follow their convictions on these essential points they sacrificed life, property and position, and book learning, if you will. But, in their heroic sacrifices, preferring eternal to temporal, truth to error, and God to Mammon, they left their children and the world an example of education which it would be well if the people of our times would imitate, and to despise or depreciate which betrays not only a

want of education, but a sad want of intelligence. Talk of comparing a man who invented a sewing machine or a patent churn, with a man who gave up all his estate, his property and his life, rather than become an apostate to God or a traitor to his conscience; this is more absurd and ridiculous than to compare that rude log meeting-house yonder in the grove, erected by a few Norwegian peasants, to St. Peter's at Rome, completed under the unrivalled superintendence of Michael Angelo."

These rambling remarks of Haley were well received by the crowd, and ended in general applause, which showed that all were pleased as well as amused. As it was advanced in the evening, about nine o'clock, the excursionists divided, some going to the tents where the religious crowd, male and female, put up, and most of the fishers and gunners going to the hotel, where they had arranged for quarters during their trip.

As they were moving along, Riordan congratulated Haley on his successful conducting of the argument in defence of the old land against the Elder and Ronay. "I am sorry," said Riordan, "that you did not give Mulroony a harder hit, confound him; why should he take part against you and his country; I could have knocked him down."

"Don't mind him; leave him to me, I will watch that fellow and show him his academic skill won't avail him when speaking against country or creed. I will let him be till I get him, like a big trout, en-

tangled in the barb of my philosophical hook, and after making a splash and a splutter, I will land him high and dry on the sand."

"Bravo, Haley!" said Mulcahy, "I am sorry I have not the gift of the gab, or I would help, but I fully believe you are a match for them all, single-handed."

"Nabocklesh," answered Haley. "Be careful, there are listeners at our heels. Nabocklesh, that's the word."





CHAPTER XXVII.

CONVERSATIONS UNDER A TENT.

THE third day our party spent at Lake Minnetonka turned out to be wet and disagreeable. The morning was dark, the sun invisible, and the whole sky overcast with a thick covering of obscure clouds, from which now and then sparks of lightning issued, foreboding a violent storm.

The gay and joyous aspect that nature wore on every side, on water, land and woods, for more than a week past, were now exchanged for that sad, demure and bluish haze, which covered everything at the approach of the violent convulsions that were coming on. Everything seemed to sympathize with the universal gloom which nature put on in homage to the presence of that power

“That blights the forest with a word,
And blasts the mightiest with a breath.”

The cattle took shelter in sheds or under the shade of close woods. The birds interrupted the

melody with which they enlivened the groves. The water-fowls retired from the centre of the lake into the numerous creeks or sequestered bays that ran into the land in all directions. The very fish that erewhile gambolled in the water or leaped into the air to seize their prey, hid themselves in the deepest recesses of the lake. And even the stoutest-hearted men felt uneasy, became grave, thoughtful and anxious, probably from the thought that those thunderstorms give rise to in the mind of the *great day* and *fearful convulsions* that will precede the final dissolution of the world we inhabit, and the coming of the Eternal Judge! Nobody, not even an unbeliever, can witness a thunderstorm without emotion more or less impressive, according to his sensibilities and sentiments of religion. Your wise and learned natural philosopher may talk of the electric fluid, and explain it all very fine, to his own satisfaction, but let a severe thunderstorm come on while he is alone on the face of a wide prairie, or let him see the gigantic oak of the forest struck and shivered into a thousand splinters by the red bolt from the clouds, and he will soon forget all his philosophy, lose his assumed stoicism, and confess with his heart, if not his lips, that God alone is omnipotent. Hence, as far back as history carries us, or even fable, the greatest men—be they the heroes, warriors or sages of the Iliad, wise men of Greece and Rome, or sainted patriarchs of the Holy Land, from Sinai to Calvary—they all ac-

known and believed that there was something sublime, impressive and mysterious and wonderful, as well as terrible, in the thunders and lightnings of Heaven.

This statement is verified in numberless passages of Holy Writ, especially in the 17th Psalm: "And He made darkness His covert, his pavilion round about Him; dark waters in the clouds of the air; hail and coals of fire; and the Lord thundered from Heaven and the Highest gave his voice. And He sent forth His arrows and scattered them: He multiplied lightnings and humbled them."

Nothing can convey to our feeble imaginations a more awful idea of the Supreme Being than that He, and He alone, can wield the thunderbolts of Heaven, and hurl them, muttering His indignation, through the skies, over the heads of guilty mortals. This warning voice from above, when no other voice can do it, often arouses the sinner to a consciousness of guilt, spoils the criminal enjoyment of the sensualist, and not unfrequently stays the man of evil design in the midst of his daring attempts to rob innocence of its purity, or industry of its honest earnings. Instead of laughing at lightning, or pretending to despise the terrific grandeur of a thunderstorm, the sensible man ought to prepare to repent, and to be ready for that great day when the elements will melt and "pass away with a great noise," the earth shall be destroyed, and nothing of the work of man shall

endure but virtue ! These were the sentiments of some, if not of all, on the occasion to which we allude on the shore of the beautiful Lake Minitonka.

All the excursionists remained in the tents, none daring to expose themselves to the torrents of rain that descended from the clouds as soon as the storm broke over the lake. Flash succeeded flash, and peal answered peal, reverberating and resounding in tones of harsh mutterings and angry groanings over hills, lakes, fields and forests. The silence that pervaded the company was hardly broken till the storm abated, then each began, like soldiers after a battle, to tell how little he or she feared, but rather was pleased to witness, such a terrible storm. Some told how they were accustomed to spend sleepless nights watching the tracks of the lightning through the sky, while others told of how they were caught on great prairies, on horseback, during a severe thunderstorm, when the animal they rode got blinded and stunned from the noise of the thunder and glare of the lightning. One man told how he was riding through a wood in a thunderstorm, and the lightning struck a tree, which fell on and killed the horse, and how he had to abandon the buggy and take refuge in the hollow trunk of a tree, of which a bear disputed the possession with him.

After most of the talkers of the company had had their say in illustrating the freaks of lightning,

our friend Riordan introduced his yarn about thunderstorms in the following manner:

"I was one of a party of excursionists to Lake Como, near St. Paul, two years ago. It is a small but pretty lake, with fine hotel accommodations, as I suppose most of you know. Well, there was one long wagon containing twenty-four young ladies all in white, with green boughs and red sashes. Just as they came up, a fearful thunder-storm came on, and as the wagon or vehicle was crossing that new road made across a small creek or bay of the lake, the bolt fell, the wagon was upset, and the twenty-four young ladies cast into the water, and—"

"Drowned?" cried several persons.

"No, ladies and gentlemen, not drowned, but badly wet. Nobody hurt, no harm done, but some extra washing of muslin. Ha! ha! ha! That was the most wonderful thunderbolt I ever saw. It fell somewhere on or around the lake, and did no harm."

"Bully for you, Nick," was the response this yarn of Riordan's met from the company.

One of the young ladies next recounted an instance of the freaks of lightning, in which the steel ribs of her parasol and her skirt-hoops were melted like lead, though she escaped with a slight stunning.

"Hence," said Miss Spoones, for it was she that first broke silence among the girls, "I shall always

cling to the crinoline, and wear it in summer, at least, no matter how the fashions change, for I attribute the saving of my life to the skirt-steel on that occasion."

"I don't blame you a bit. I should do the same if they saved my life," said Miss McLauren. "I knew a young lady who was saved from being drowned in the Mississippi, by her skirts. They were made of waterproof material, and getting filled with air, acted like a balloon, and so she floated to the shore on Lake Pepin."

"Good, good, for you Kate," said Elder Bull; "yours is the best story, Miss McLaurin. Now, ladies and gentlemen," he continued, "as it is likely to keep wet all day, had we not better have a religious meeting, or introduce some more serious matter for conversation than the relative value of hoop-skirts? What says the company to a prayer-meeting? Would not this be acceptable to all?"

"No, no. Let each say his own prayers," answered several, among others Haley and McLaurin.

"Well, then, let us have a friendly talk on religious subjects."

"It was agreed when we started," rejoined Haley, "that religion and politics should not be introduced, and I see no reason to rescind that arrangement."

"I won't insist on those matters. But I want light, and would like to ask you, Mr. Haley, or such of your friends as don't object, some few questions in regard to the belief of Catholics."

"I have no objection to answer all your questions, as far as I know how, if you really seek information, and eliminate discourtesy and insult, I am ever ready to give an account of my faith, and it is my duty to satisfy all sincere inquirers after light, as you call it, for the truth of what I believe."

"That is very fair and liberal in you. Will you allow me to ask if you are not a Jesuit? I thought you was."

"Me a Jesuit?" answered Haley in amazement. "What on earth could make you think so. I am nothing but a plain schoolmaster. I have not piety or education enough to be a Jesuit."

"Well, I will tell you. I perceived how ready you *was* to answer every question put to you and to explain everything in favor of your church, that I considered you must be a Jesuit, or at least educated by that sect of Christians."

"You are complimentary, Elder, to the Jesuits, who are no sect or fraction of a sect, if not to me, in attributing my ready answers to the training of that celebrated teaching order. No, I not only am not a Jesuit, but I never frequent any of their schools, to my great regret. You must have a queer idea of a Jesuit, when you fancy such an undisciplined person as I am could be one."

"My idea of a Jesuit," rejoined the Elder, "is that he is a man who can cause error to appear as truth, and truth error, and that he may embrace and

profess any system, religion or opinions, in order to enforce his own views or carry out his ends."

"Elder, I am sorry your ideas of a Jesuit are the very reverse of true. A Jesuit is a man who tries to copy the life of Jesus Christ as near as he can, and is not only ready, but has vowed, to sacrifice everything—life, wealth, and the pursuit of happiness, for the greater glory of God. There is no duplicity, deceit or double dealing in this. St. Peter, St. Paul and the twelve apostles were Jesuits, for they left all to follow Jesus."

"Well, now, I have been taught the reverse of this ever since I could read or spell. If you look into our standard dictionaries, you will find Jesuit there defined—for instance, in Webster—a crafty, cunning, deceitful person."

"I know you will find such erroneous definitions in Webster, and other Protestant lexicographers, who find it to their interest to pander to the sectarian bigotry of the people and age among which they live. The Jesuit principles, however, are the very reverse of the popular Protestant opinions regarding them, I assure you. Their theologians teach, as the Church does, that evil cannot be done that good may follow, or in other words, a man would not be justified in committing the slightest sin for the greatest good to mankind, or the salvation of the whole world."

"The very reverse is what is generally believed of the Jesuits."

“I know it. That is what is popularly, if not generally, believed; hence the necessity for a man, for instance a preacher, to be well posted before he would hazard making any statement against the Order of Jesuits, or any other body of men, before satisfying himself, by inquiry and reading, that his statements were true. We should never go to the enemies of any class of men to learn what the principles of their opponents are. You would not be pleased if I should condemn all you Methodists as hypocrrites and libertines, because Horace Cooke, Dr. Huston, Moffatt, Dr. Lanahan and many more of your head ministers were convicted of such crimes; or if I should assert that your preachers are removed annually, generally, for fear they would be detected in too many of those acts of unchastity which the popular opinion generally impeaches them with. This would not be fair. Neither is it fair to accuse the Jesuits of duplicity or disloyalty, because one or two writers, calling themselves Jesuits, may have written books in which such principles may be found; while in the rules and constitutions of the Jesuit Society, nothing but the purest morality and scrupulous exactitude of discipline can be found, together with the most disinterested piety and charity.”

“I agree to what you have stated in regard to the injustice of condemning a class of men, or a religious denomination, for the shortcomings of a

few professing to follow that denomination. But this is not my great objection to your church. I object to its creed, because it contains too much mystery. How simple our church is in her teaching. She receives any person who believes in Christ to her communion. I have assisted, and, I may say conducted, eighteen camp-meetings, and I never refused to *take in* those who professed faith in Jesus."

"Well, then, at that rate, Catholics are good Methodists, for you cannot but allow that they believe in Christ. Even Mohammedans could be taken in at your *holy* camp-meetings, for they, even, believe in Christ. You object to mysteries? Mysteries are revealed truths which we cannot comprehend. You say there are too many mysteries, or revealed truths. I regret that we have not many more revealed truths. I should like to know when the day of judgment will come. This is a truth, but the time of its taking place has not been revealed. I should like to know if there are inhabitants in the sun, moon and stars, and what is their occupation, size and form. You see these are matters beyond our comprehension, but, if they were mysteries, or 'revealed truths,' we could, at least, believe something in regard to them, and have some idea of how these things are.

"Mr. Haley, I do not think you understand me exactly," continued the Elder. "What I mean is, that men ought not to be required to believe what they do not understand."

“ Oh, is that it? Do *you* understand all you profess to believe? You believe there is but *one* Supreme Creator and Lord of Heaven and earth, and that there are three Divine Persons, each of whom is supreme, eternal, omnipresent and omniscient. You believe the Son of God, equal in all things to His Eternal Father, came down from Heaven, was born of the Immaculate Virgin, died on the Cross, and yet He was always present in Heaven, endowed with the Eternal Majesty, and was never absent from Heaven for one moment. Do you understand these mysteries? Indeed, I may ask you, leaving aside divine things, which are necessarily above our limited understandings, do you understand the nature of anything that you see or feel? You can't tell me what caused the storm that has passed over our heads, or what it was that made the lightning to cut such fantastic figures, as it flew from cloud to cloud, or from the heavens to the earth. You may tell me it is the electric fluid that caused all these phenomena. But, then, can you tell me what the electric fluid is? This is a *mere* name we give this natural mystery, but by no means defines its nature. The word signifies, in Greek, *amber*, and the thing got this name from the fact that what we call *electricity* was first discovered by friction with a piece of amber. What would be thought of a man who did not believe in sending a telegraphic message, because he did not understand what electricity is? Would he not be

laughed at as unwise? No less unwise and absurd do those act who refuse to believe anything which they cannot understand."

"This is a plausible Jesuitical argument, indeed, I allow. But there are some things so absurd that the mind cannot consent to them. One of these is the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation. What an absurdity that God should be contained in a little bit of bread, or rather a wafer."

"Now, sir, there is nothing absurd in believing that God could be in a bit of bread, though the Catholic creed says no such thing. But the absurdity and contradiction would be that there could be a *bit of bread*, or any other particle or portion of matter, or space in all the extent of creation, where *God is not present*. Don't you know, if there was any place where *God is not*, then He would cease to be omnipresent; one of His most essential attributes would be lost. Now the Catholic creed teaches, and teaches only, what Christ said, namely, that it was His body, and not bread, that He held in his hands, when He, after having consecrated it, gave it to His disciples. The Catholic Church does not teach that the bread contains Christ's body (it is only Protestants who make that absurd statement), while the Church teaches it is Christ's body *alone* that is there in the sacrament. Our Lord stated that what He held in His hands was His living body. He told the world that we must receive the body, in fact, *eat it*, to be saved. St. Paul tells

the Christians, many years after, to beware of profaning Christ's body present in the Eucharist, and that those who eat it unworthily, eat and drink their own damnation, if they are not pure, and they have not faith to discern the body of the Lord present under the similes of bread and wine ! Now this is all the Church teaches. There is nothing absurd in believing the words of Christ. There is nothing absurd in believing the words of St. Paul, delivered many years after Christ's ascension. But it is absurdity and impiety for Protestants to say, when Christ says, 'This is my body,' 'No, it is not, it is only a figure of your body,' when St. Paul exhorts the people to examine themselves, and be ready to discern the body of the Lord. I repeat, the Methodists say '*no*, the body of Christ is not there, only a little bread. How, then, can we discern it?' Hence, these pious roaring Christians, don't insist on any examination, but are willing to *take all men in* who believe that Christ died for sinners. Indeed, I allow they do *take men in*, for they don't study or understand the Scriptures. But, Elder, as the afternoon is now already advanced, and as the storm has abated, I must beg to discontinue to speak on these sacred subjects. I see the fish begin again to rise over the water, the birds begin to sing, and as this is to be our last day here, we had better return to our sports, leaving you Reverend Elders and you pious lady disciples, to meditate on these topics we have been discussing in this cursory manner."

“I beg pardon, I want to say a word or two more, and I am done. The difficulty about transubstantiation remains still. Some of our five senses, I allow, may be deceived in regard to some objects in nature that come before them, but I don't know any instance where the *whole* five senses are mistaken, except in this had-to-be-believed dogma of Romanism—transubstantiation.”

“Elder, you are mistaken again, I am sorry to tell you. There are many, very many things, in and around us, in which all the senses are deceived. For instance, take a pail of new milk, and examine it; you don't see, feel, smell, hear or taste butter in the milk, and yet there is always butter in the milk. Again, take a square yard of earth; you don't see, feel, hear, smell or taste wheat, corn or potatoes in the earth, and yet most assuredly the essence and elements of all these, and many more useful productions, are in that square yard of earth, otherwise it would not yield wheat, oats, corn, potatoes, onions beets, apples, pears, and all the other innumerable fruits and vegetables that will derive their substance therefrom if the germ only of the several plants is planted in the earth. Again, take an anvil in a blacksmith's shop, nothing but ice can be colder. No heat in it. You can't smell, feel, hear, taste or see any heat in the anvil. Yet, hammer on it for a few minutes and it will ring, and soon become so hot as to burn your hand, if you lay it on. The latent fire was in it all the time, unknown to the

five senses, till the hammering brought it to the surface. There are countless things in the world which the five senses can be cognizant of, even with the addition of what may be called the sixth sense of Yankee cuteness, as well as the sacred mystery of transubstantiation, and notwithstanding the defect of the senses, these things have matter and form and reality as well as the things that do come under the cognizance of the senses. We have only to look around us to find these instances. No man can tell what life is, whether it consists in motion, heat, or other undiscovered principle, though every man is conscious that he lives and moves. Talk no more then, let us not, if not being willing to believe but what we understand. We understand so little, that the most learned men excel the ignorant only in the consciousness of how little they know, or ever can know, when they contemplate the infinite number of subjects that must forever remain unknown outside the reach of the limited human intellect. I presume it is not the doctrine of transubstantiation that staggers your faith, as much as the manner in which that miracle takes place. We have nothing to do with the *how* or the *manner* in which God performs this consoling miracle. All that we are required by faith to do is to believe the words of Christ, leaving to him alone the Divine power by which the change is effected. The Jews objected to our Lord, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

“Are those not guilty of a like impiety who refuse to believe this mystery because they can’t see *how* it can happen? But when we see mysteries all around us, the why and the wherefore of which we can never unravel, why should we invade the Divine province of Faith by trying to unravel what infinitely surpasses the human comprehension.”

This ended the conversation for the present between the Elder and the Irish school-master.

The storm had passed over, and having partaken of a lunch, the whole party evacuated their tents, some to fish, some to hunt, and others to take a sail on the lake. Young Ronay, alias Mulroony, with his friend, Professor Hoskey, kept company with Miss Spoones and a few other young ladies who preferred walking on the dry sandy beach to pick up curious shells and pebbles, to the more fatiguing exercises of angling, gunning or pulling of oars. They had a pleasant time of it together, commenting as they rather severely remarked on what they called the queer state of argument followed by Haley, in his conversation with the Elder. Both of the *learned* academicians, Ronay and Hoskey, were sorry they had not a chance to demolish the Irish teacher’s “queer logic,” as they termed it.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

A SHOOTING AFFAIR AT THE LAKE.

“**D**IDN'T I tell ye, gentlemen, that some accident would happen those excursionists who left here the other morning for Lake Minnetonka?” said Mr. Smylie, the commercial traveller, at the first-class hotel in the village of Brighton.

“What accident happened, eh?” “Anybody hurt?” “Did any of the wagons break down, or was anybody drowned in the lake?” “What did happen? Please tell at once!” asked several persons at the same time.

“One of the party got shot, that's all that happened. But sure, that is enough for one excursion. It beats all, how a single one of these picnic excursions cannot take place without some dreadful accident. The excursion before this, two girls fell overboard, or threw themselves into the lake from a barge and were drowned. The one before that, again, two roughs stabbed one another, and

now there is a man shot, and little hopes of his recovery."

"Why, you don't say, Smylie," interrupted Mr. Broadhead. "Who is it got shot? one of those foolish young men who carried their rifles, expecting to shoot deer, I bet!"

"No, it was young Ronay, who carried neither gun nor fishing-pole. Oh, he is dreadfully mangled about the face and head."

"You don't say!" "How did you come to know it?" "Have you seen him?" asked several who sat at the breakfast-table.

"This morning, feeling very restless, about three o'clock, I got up and went out and sat under the piazza, when what should I see but one of the excursion wagons coming up at a brisk pace. I halted them, and asked what was the matter, when one of the young men—that medical student, Mulcahy, I believe, is his name—told me that last evening, after the thunderstorm passed, they all left the tents for a last ramble on the lake shore, in different directions, some to hunt and some to fish, when—"

"When he got shot, by his own piece accidentally discharging, I'll bet," interrupted one of the gentlemen, impatient to learn the facts.

"No, sir," resumed the commercial traveller: "but Ronay and Miss Spoones being alone, and resting on a rustic seat, under the shade of some white-oak trees, one of the hunters, as he states,

mistaking them for deer, fired, and shot Ronay, wounding him, it is feared, mortally, in the head."

"Mistaking him for a deer, eh," rejoined Mr. Broadhead, ironically. "That's all gammon. How on earth could anybody, with the use of his eyes, mistake a young lady and gentleman for deer? But you did not tell us who was guilty of this outrage?"

"You did not give me time. It was no other than Elder Bull's son, the one they call 'Spike,' too, that fired the shot. You know he is a half-witted fellow, at best, and I fear he won't suffer any penalty for his rash act."

"We hear enough about his being a fool. He is more rogue than fool, that badly-raised young man. He has had a spite of long standing against that talented young man, Ronay, or Mulroony, as his countrymen call him; and now he takes a cowardly advantage of one whom he dared not face in a fair stand-up fight. This is really devilish, so it is."

"It is nothing short of it," remarked Mr. Smith. "If I should be on his jury, I would bring him in guilty of wilful murder; indeed I would, if the facts be as you state them."

"So would I," answered Broadhead; "and the young scamp must be put through, if there is justice in Minnesota. Confound Spike. That young Irish-American was worth more than a ship-load of such cusses as he. Where have they carried the

wounded man—home to his mother's place? Has he had any surgeon to see to him?"

"I guess not, as yet, except the young man, Mulcahy, who is a graduate of a medical college in Ireland, though he does not practice in this country. He told me that Ronay's recovery was doubtful, especially since he lost so much blood before his companions came up to where he lay wounded, and insensible from loss of blood. This Mulcahy, however, knew enough to make pressure on the severed artery, till he got means of tying it, and then, by administering stimulants, recruited him so as to get him on a spring-wagon, and then they travelled in the cool night-air, so that they reached here before sunrise."

"Well, well, well," exclaimed old Mr. Branch, the banker. "Every day brings worse news than the day before. I wonder what will happen next? My son, George, was in the same class at school with that young man, Ronay, and speaks of him in the highest terms. He says he is a talented, smart, high-minded and honorable young man, though he is Irish."

"Yes, he carried off all the premiums from them at school, and as he was likely to have the same success among the young ladies that he had in learning, they thought they would murder him. Too bad! too bad!" exclaimed Broadhead.

"It may be done accidentally, gentlemen," resumed Mr. Smylie, "but it looks rather suspicious.

However, as there will be an investigation, and a jury pass judgment on the occurrence, it is not for us to prejudge the matter. But, take it at best, it is a shocking occurrence."

"You did not tell us, Smylie, where they took him," resumed Mr. Broadhead. "I would like to go to see him, if they have not taken him home to the Irish settlement."

"No, they have not. After halting, down at the drug-store, to get some bandages and other things needed, they drove the wounded young man down to widow Spoones' mansion. His companions and countrymen wanted to take him home to his mother, but Miss Polly would not hear of it, and Dr. Blackman gave his opinion that carrying him any farther, over rough roads and under the heat of the sun, would do him harm. So they carried him to the Spoones mansion, where he will be well cared for, no doubt."

"That respectable family seems to have hard luck," remarked Mr. Broadhead; "it's only little over a year since the old man, his father, was found dead on his bed, after a slight accident from getting upset in a snow-drift, and now, to have his only son, I believe, cut off so suddenly, it will break the old lady's heart, sure enough."

"There is one who won't be sorry to hear of this accident, I know," said Mr. Smith, the miller.

"Whom do you mean? Miss Muggins, who they say was almost crazy to get married to Ronay?" inquired Mr. Broadhead.

"Not at all. I don't think you could get a woman so cruel-hearted as that, even though she did get slighted. Once a woman loves sincerely, she can never, I believe, altogether get rid of the sentiments to which she gives herself up."

"No, do you say?" interrupted Mr. Smylie; "you must know very little of womankind, Smith. You can't have read Shakespeare, or you would learn that all hell cannot produce such a fiend as a woman whose passion is despised by man. I forget the words of the immortal dramatist, but that is the substance of what he says about woman's rejected love. But, without going to poets or philosophers for evidence, we all know that while a good woman is a treasure of inestimable value, a low, ignorant and base woman is the greatest monster in creation. Smith, I did not think you were such a novice in your experience of women."

"I must allow that not being such a good-looking man as you, I am not such a favorite with the ladies, and of course my knowledge of the fair sex cannot compare with yours. I did not allude to a lady when I said I knew of one who would rejoice at having Ronay cut off. I meant his rival, Elder Redtop."

"Oh, him, eh? Who cares for what that simpleton may think. I am aware that he tried to get Miss Spoones to marry him, but I don't think that if there was not another man on the top of this broad earth, she would have him. No, no, she's too proud for that, I'm sure."

"I don't know. The Elder is confident she is to be his wife. He says he has had some sort of an assurance from a fortune-teller that she is to be his wife for sure, and now when his rival is out of the way, there will be no impediment to his success."

"That may be; indeed, it is hard telling," said Mr. Broadhead, "without the gift of fortune-telling, what women will do. Let's come over to Miss Spoones' and see for ourselves, gentlemen, what damage has been done, and if there is any chance for the young man's recovery."

The gentlemen all present, being eight or ten in number, proceeded in pairs to the Spoones mansion, where they saw for themselves the dreadful condition of the wounded young man, Ronay. There they found him on a sofa-bed in the back parlor, surrounded by two surgeons, Doctors Hewit and Jackson, who, after having placed the sufferer under the influence of chloroform, were trying to reduce the fractured jaw to something like its original shape. The ball entered near the angle of the lower jaw, shattering it dreadfully, and in its course taking away three molar and four of the incisor teeth; it also cut the facial artery, a branch of the external carotid where it crosses the jaw before it divides into the submental and submaxillary branches. It was the bleeding from this severed artery that nearly proved fatal, it being a pretty large vessel, sufficient to cause death by hemorrhage in about fifteen minutes.

And had it not happened providentially that the Irish medical graduate of Queen's College was present, Mulroony would have breathed his last on the romantic shore of Lake Minnetonka. Now, however, the surgeons were hopeful of his recovery, especially since they learned from examination that the bullet did not remain in his flesh, but after its ugly execution went whistling through the air until its energy was spent, or it encountered something more solid than human flesh and bones to stop its destructive progress.

After the shattered bones were adjusted skillfully, and the effects of the chloroform had ceased, the patient opened his eyes in a wild manner, and exclaimed, "Oh mother, mother, forgive me this time, I will be good in future! Oh, mother, do forgive me!" And then, closing his large dark eyes, he again relapsed into a disturbed repose.

Various opinions were expressed by the crowd assembled around the Spoones mansion regarding the melancholy occurrence. Some were for lynching the perpetrator, who, they said, had been heard often to threaten the wounded man's life; others, the friends of Elder Bull, protested that it was the result of the merest accident; and referred to several instances in which hunters had lately killed one another; in one case, it was a brother who had killed his brother; these parties tried to acquit the Elder's son of all blame. There was one thing, however, militated against

the assassin, and that was, immediately after he saw Mulroony fall, he fled, nobody knew whither. And there were not wanting a few who felt the very reverse of sorrow for the accident, and these few were Elder Redtop and his friends.





CHAPTER XXIX.

THE SAD NEWS IS BROUGHT TO HIS MOTHER AND THE PRIEST.

HAVING left their wounded young friend as comfortable as the most careful attendance could make him, Mulcahy, Haley and the remainder of the Irish-American excursionists proceeded in a body to the Irish settlement with the intention of acquainting his mother with the accident that had befallen her son.

Some of the young men hesitated, being unwilling to be the first heralds of such sad news to his poor mother; but Mulcahy, Hogan and Haley maintained against Riordan, Herbert and others, that duty required, not to speak of kindness, that the man's mother should hear the news, however sad, as soon as possible.

"What if he should die before his mother would reach his bedside?" said Mulcahy; "and if he should happen to die, you may depend that those bigots around his bed would be ready to make capital out of the event, either by declaring that he died in the profession of their scurvy sects, or have

a clandestine marriage performed between himself and Miss Polly, after the pattern of the Richardson-McFarland affair, conducted by Mountebank Beecher, of Plymouth meeting-house fame."

"Do you think, Mulcahy," said Hogan, "that there is any danger of death? You ought to know, and, if there is, two of us ought to go back and sit by his bedside till we see the end."

"Well, I don't know. It's hard telling what course the bullet took after the fracture of the lower jaw. If the ball passed through after its terrible execution, without remaining in his head, he will be all right. But if, as is very possible, it ascended and has lodged in the brain, or within the cranium, I would not give a pin for his chances of recovery."

"Why, I don't see how it could go into the cavity of the skull, for, after having shattered the jaw-bone, a straight line would have taken it out through the opposite jaw, or through his mouth."

"That's true enough if the missile took a straight line in its course. But it is seldom that bullets do describe straight lines after entering the human body. I have seen a case, and more than one instance, where the ball struck a man in the forehead, but instead of penetrating the bones went right around the head under the scalp, and came out in the very same aperture at which it entered, thus making a perfect circle around the wounded man's head."

"Indeed! I should think that would be impossible. Did you really see such a case as you describe?"

"Yes, I did, in more than half-a-dozen instances when I was in the hospital at Scutari, near Constantinople, during the Crimean war. When a ball strikes one, especially if its force is nearly spent, the least thing, a button, the head of a large pin, or a small bone, is sufficient to cause it to deflect its course, and often sends it in a direction the very opposite to which it entered. If I had instruments to probe the wound of our young friend Mulroony, I could soon learn what became of the ball. But, as I had nothing of the kind, I thought it more prudent, after I staunched the wound, not to disturb it again until the professional men arrive from the city, who will attend to him and get their pay for it."

"I approve of your course, Mulcahy," said Haley; "it is best to leave these cases to the professional men. If he died under your hands, you would be blamed, whereas if the doctors kill him, it will be done *secundum artem*, and then it will be all right. But how will we break the matter to his afflicted mother without causing her a shock that may end her life?"

"We must appear as cheerful as possible, and tell her that he met with a very serious accident," answered Riordan.

"No, by George," rejoined Mulcahy, "that

would be deception. Tell her he got shot, and that his wound is a very serious wound. She ought to be at his bedside, and the priest ought also to be sent for. This is the way to do, is it not, friends?" he asked impressively.

"Yes, you are right, Mulcahy," said they all. "Let you be the one to acquaint the old lady, while we remain outside in the wagon."

"I have no objection, but we had best all come in together. We can each put in a word where we think it is needed, to mitigate, if we can, the severity of the dreadful news."

Accordingly, having deliberated on what they were to say and do, the young men, as soon as they arrived at the Mulroony homestead, hitched their panting teams to the posts at the gate, and entered the front door.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the matron, accosting them familiarly, as she was returning to the house with a large bouquet of flowers. "Returning from the camp-meeting so early, is it?"

"Returning from our first visit to Lake Minnetonka. You must not call it camp-meeting. You know, ma'am, if anything of that kind was intended, we would not be here," replied Mulcahy.

"But had you not all the dominies and elders there, and the pious old maids, and was there not plenty of prayers and psalm-singing, and of course some courting, or sparking, as they call it? And what more could they have at camp-meeting?"

"I allow there was a little of all those pious exercises, all except the last, or sparking, and if there was anything of that going on, our friend Nick here is the man to consult, for he is *au fait* in that branch of modern progress—ha! ha! ha!"

"That's a cut for you, Mr. Riordan," replied the old lady. "Where did you leave my boy Pat? Why is he not home with ye? Seriously, Jack, has anything happened him?" she added, after observing the grave countenance of the young man.

"Well, ma'am, I am sorry to have to tell you that your son met with an accident."

"Oh God! did he get drowned? Tell me the truth at once!"

"No, no, but he got wounded by the accidental discharge of a fowling-piece. He is not very dangerously wounded, I hope. Still, it is a serious wound."

"Oh, Holy Virgin, help me, his heart-broken mother!" she exclaimed, and then she fainted, and became unconscious.

It took but ten minutes, however, to revive her, and then she clasped her hands, cast herself on her knees before a picture of the Madonna that hung on the wall over a small oratory, and having prayed silently, but in tears, she rose up strengthened in her confidence in God, and full of calm resignation to His will.

Then she asked, "Where did ye leave my poor

unhappy boy? In the hospital in the city, or where he was wounded? Tell me, that I may go to see him!"

"Madam," answered Hogan, "he is not so badly injured as you imagine. He met with the accident out at Lake Minnetonka, but we brought him along during the cool night air, and now he is right down in the village, at the house of widow Spoones, where he has every care and attendance that he needs."

"There!" she exclaimed, in anger; "why did ye leave him there? I would rather see him out on the prairie than in that house, or among those scheming people. Don't you know that it was in that house, or among those cunning people, not to call 'em worse, that my poor child first learned to disobey and slight his mother and neglect his duties?"

"No, ma'am, we knew nothing of the kind," responded Mulcahy. "We noticed that members of that family were very kind and attentive to your son, and, as they showed great regard and concern for him and his trouble, we consented that he should stay there, especially as the day was getting warm, and he appeared to need rest."

"Oh, I am sorry ye did not bring him home to die, even if he died on the way, rather than leave him there. But I must get him home out of that place. Do you think, Mr. Mulcahy, he was in danger, so as to need the priest?"

"Well, I would recommend that the priest be notified. It may not be absolutely needed, but it is the safer way."

"Oh, I guess he needs the priest. Run you, David," she said, addressing the hired man, "take a horse and saddle, and tell the priest to hurry to visit your poor boss, who is almost dead. Lose no time, and say I sent you, and say that he lies dangerously wounded in Brighton, at Mrs. Spoones', though he shan't be there long."

"Will one of you gentlemen, you, Mr. Hogan, or Mr. Riordan, drive me to the village?"

"Yes, of course, very willingly, and shall be glad to remain there to see to him in case he can't be removed."

"O, then he is worse than you told me at first. Why can't he be removed? If you were able to bring him from Lake Minnetonka to the village, why not from there to his own home?"

"Well, he may be weaker now than immediately after the accident happened. He may be in what the doctors call an 'idiopathic fever,' and it may be deemed dangerous to disturb him for a few days."

"Well, now, I perceive I am almost deranged. I never asked you how the accident occurred. Had he fire-arms with him, or was it his own act, this accident?"

"No. It happened in this manner. A young man had been shooting at a deer, and as the ani-

mal was wounded, it made for the lake, pursued by the hunter; when, unfortunately, your son being mistaken for the animal in the shades of the wood and the twilight of the evening, received the contents of the gun of Elder Bull's son, for he did it, in his lower jaw, shattering the bone badly."

"Oh, alas! that my poor boy ever made the acquaintance of that notoriously bad boy. During several months, indeed, since the first day poor Pat went to that academy, under the evil advice of a notorious libertine called Hoskey, that Elder's son has been ever his enemy. And now the end has come which I ever dreaded, but which I could never cause his father, God rest him, to fear or imagine."

"Oh I don't think there is any likelihood that this wound will end his life, but it would of course, deform his features very much."

"God help him, I fear that his soul is more deformed than his appearance, for it is over two years now, I believe, since he approached the sacraments or paid any attention to his religious duties. Perhaps this mishap may now open his eyes to the lamentable state of mind in which he has lived so long. God send, it may do him good, though Saint Francis De Sales, I believe, says, that few are converted through sickness or bodily infirmity."

While the old lady was entertaining her companions, those young men, the associates of her son, with such melancholy reflections as the foregoing

dialogue represents, the young man David had reached the priest's house with his "sick call." The priest was just returning from the church after his five o'clock Mass, when the messenger addressed him, saying, "Your reverence, I come to invite you to a sick call."

"Who is it that's sick?" asked the priest.

"My young boss, sir, Mr. Mulroony."

"What has made him sick? Did I not see him two or three days ago riding around here with a carriage of young women, and he was as rugged as a young colt?"

"'Tis not sick he is at all, your reverence, but he is almost dead!"

"He is almost dead, and not sick, eh? What sort of talk is this for you, David?"

"I beg your pardon, reverence. I did not mean to say he was sick from fever, or any disease, but he is near dead for all that, for he got shot."

"Shot, did you say? Who shot him?"

"Really, I don't know, sir, who shot him, but his mother sent me to hurry your reverence to come in haste to see him."

"Where is he, when did he get shot, and who shot him? Can you not answer these questions?"

"Yes, your reverence. He got shot out at Lake Minnetonka, at a camp-meeting. He is now in the valley below, at Madam Spoones'. He got shot, I think, last night or early this morning, and there is hardly a puff in him now, I am told. Your

reverence must hurry, or you won't catch him alive."

"Oh, well, I can't help that. I am really sorry for his good mother, but for the lad himself I have not much sympathy. I often warned him against the company he kept, but he preferred the counsel of Professor Hoskey to mine, and he was more attentive to camp-meeting than to his Church."

"He may be sorry for all that now, your reverence. They say he called for your reverence. I hope, anyhow, you will come at once, for his mother sent me for you."

"I will, of course, because she sent for me; but as for your young boss, Paran M. Ronay, *alias* Paddy Mulroony, I have not much hope of him. I don't think he is going to be converted, even if he is shot, unless the shot will prove his death. In that case, I hope the Lord will have mercy on him. Be off, now, young man, and tell them I will be with him as soon as possible. Do *you* take care, for fear you would get shot. Be attentive to your religious duties, and keep away from camp-meetings and all such places."

"Never fear, your reverence. I never went to any of them places, though I often heard them roarin' and shoutin' in the grove below there, when I would be goin' after the cows. I was often asked to go there, to get acquainted with the girls, but me mother told me in Ireland, in Fedmore county, Limerick, where she lived, God be good to

her soul, never to turn me back on me religion, nor to go near any of those meetings, not for all the money in the world. And I never did, nor do I mean to, please God."

"That's right; don't forget your mother's advice. Go off, now, and God bless you."

"Well, sir, before I go I want to tell you that our family in Limerick were good Catholics. We had not much education; we could all read and write, and learned the Catechism, that's all. But me mother told us all to attend to our religion; to go to confession four times a year, or once a month, if we could; not like most people hereabout, who never go near a priest except when they have a child to baptize, or a marriage ceremony on hand. We paid our dues at Christmas and Easter, and never missed a station."

"That's right; you do well to remember these things."

"Reverend sir, I never forgets my mother's advice. She is now in Heaven, I hope. If I had a dollar now, I would give it you to say Mass for her soul."

"Don't mind the dollar; I will pray for her, and remember her in my sacrifices. Run off, now, good bye." *Exit.*



CHAPTER XXX.

THE NET IS DRAWN TIGHTLY OVER THE VICTIM.

WHILE his afflicted mother was preparing to visit her unfortunate son to comfort and console him, there were gathered around his bed a clique of *pious* individuals anxious to profit by his misfortune. These persons were Elder Bull and wife, and the leading ministers of the neighborhood, who came to tender their counsel to Miss Polly Spoones in this emergency. They felt great sympathy for her, they stated, and thought something ought to be done to secure her in obtaining the fruit of her protracted and zealous labors. Elder Fribbler remarked that if her young friend died from his wounds, all they could do would be to give Miss Spoones full credit for the success of her evangelical labors in bringing her young friend Ronay within the pale of the Methodist Church. This would indeed be a great glory to her, and would hand down her name among the great women of the day.

“Yes, Brother Fribbler,” rejoined Elder Bull, “that would redound to her fame, sartin, but she is entitled, our good sister as she is, to more than barren glory. Glory is a good thing in itself, but that is a sort of wealth that properly belongs to the next life. He went in for some comfort in this life too, and who would say that our zealous sister was not justly entitled to some *profit* in this life, even if she would have to suffer the *loss* of her young friend.”

“True, true,” replied Elder Fribbler, “she is unquestionably entitled to something more than barren fame, for she has not only succeeded in detaching young Ronay from the errors of Popery, but such men as Professor Hoskey are gained to our Church, and it is said that several young men from the Irish settlement are completely weaned through the tracts and books which Miss Spoones has circulated, and the sociables she conducted, from the superstitious customs of the Catholics.”

Fribbler was in favor of getting up some testimonial for their fellow-laborer in the vineyard, Miss Spoones. The question was in what shape the public sense should manifest its approbation of her good services. He would go in for anything the ‘*brethering*’ would recommend and approve.

“Ah, Brother Fribbler,” exclaimed the presiding Elder, “you seem not to comprehend my meaning. Miss Spoones is no pauper, and would not receive any pecuniary compensation for her

Godly labors. There is some other way for rewarding her besides a testimonial."

"If there is, Elder," answered Fribbler, "I would like to know it. I want light on the subject."

"Well, you shall have it, if you don't interrupt me too often. What is to hinder us here and now to make these two, who love one another, one."

"I don't see how that can be done while he is not in his senses. If he would only wake up out of this swoon, what you propose might be effected."

"Swoon or no swoon, I say we can, in the name of the Lord, make these young people one. There are many instances of death-bed marriages on record. Do you forget, for instance, the example of our celebrated brother Beecher, in New York, in the McFarland-Richardson affair? They were married when one of the parties was at the point of death, and, furthermore, during the lifetime of the first husband of the lady. Why can't we do likewise? Does not the good book say, 'Go and do thou likewise?'"

"That is a new idea to me. It never occurred to me, that case."

"No, I guess not. Very few original ideas occur to some men, but when men of genius originate enterprises, then the minor lights all borrow their brightness."

"That's so. I allow you are a smart man, Elder

Bull. You deserve all the honor you enjoy in the church and state."

"Now I want the family consulted. Call in Miss Spoones and her mother, and if they have no objections, we shall dispatch this business at once."

The old lady and her daughter obeyed the summons forthwith; the latter appeared sad, and as if she had shed some tears.

"Now, ladies, I hope you won't think me meddlesome, or that I purpose anything painful to your feelings, if I ask you a few questions."

"Oh, not at all," answered the old lady. "We shall hear anything you say, and Polly, I trust, will answer all you ask her in candor."

"Well, now, I want to know if there wasn't an engagement of marriage between your daughter and this ere young man?"

"Well, I rather think there was. But here she is, ask herself. Answer the Elder, Polly dear, and don't be ashamed to tell all."

"Well, mother, I hate now to speak of such things, while my bosom friend is so low; in fact, till he is out of danger."

"Miss Spoones," said the Elder emphatically, "I feel for you very much. But you had better cheer up. Now if this young man dies, all your labor is in vain. In fact, what you have done will be accounted a *loss* instead of a *profit*. But if you tell candidly how the matter stood between ye both, I can make ye man and wife on the strength of past promises between ye."

"You could, Elder, could you?" exclaimed the old lady, agreeably surprised. "Then, Polly dear, tell all that happened."

"Well, we were engaged since more than a year. And he was only waiting for his mother, who was a bigoted Papist, to go east, to marry me in public. I hope you ain't going to ask me what took place in *private* between us?"

"Oh, no; keep that to yourself. But you distinctly state that ye were engaged?"

"Oh, yes; many a long day since."

"All right, then; I shall marry ye here, on the spot. Then, if he should die, you are entitled to one-third of his property, and that will be something to compensate you for the *loss* of all your zeal and time in going with this young man to our church. There ought to be *profit* as well as *loss*."

"You are very kind, Elder," interrupted the old lady, "and my daughter will remember you for this."

"Nothing at all, but my duty. Now, call the witnesses, and fix yourself up a little, Miss Spoones, till I make you Mrs. P. M. Ronay."

"The trouble will be to get the young man's consent," said Mrs. Nugget, who was present.

"And the doctor's also; for he said that the patient should not be woke up till after the effects of the opiates passed off," said Aunt Sally, the nurse.

"Don't you have no fears, Aunt Sally; we won't disturb him at all," replied the presiding Elder.

“There ain’t no occasion for him to be disturbed much. You just take hold of his hand, and I shall ask the questions. But, before I commence this solemn ceremony, allow me to address the Throne of Grace on your behalf: ‘We thank Thee, O Lord, for the love Thou hast been pleased to inspire these young people with. They have walked in the paths of Thy commandments; they have heeded the counsels of Thy law; they have loved one another. Let them persevere in this love to the end; let them be a comfort to one another, and an ornament to Thy church; let them from this day forth walk in the same paths of Thy commandments; let them be of one mind, and of one flesh. Amen.’ Now, join hands. You take your friend’s hand, Miss Spoones!”

“P. M. Ronay, wilt thou take Miss Polly Spoones for thy lawful wife? If you can’t answer in words, make pressure with thy hand.”

“Do you feel his hand pressing yours, Miss Polly?”

“Yes, Elder, I think I do.”

“Very well, that’s just as valid as if he spoke. Now, Miss Polly Spoones, do you take P. M. Ronay for thy lawful husband?”

“Yes, sir, I do, willingly.”

“Then I pronounce you man and wife. And now let us thank the Lord for His mercy to those loving people. Allow me to congratulate you, Mrs. Ronay, on your auspicious marriage. And I will

give you leave to retire, for I see some strangers entering."

Just as the Elder concluded his mock ceremonial, Mrs. Mulroony entered, accompanied by the two or three young Irishmen, Mulcahy, Hogan, and Haley, whom we have already mentioned, and who introduced the old lady to those who surrounded the wounded young man's bed. Then commenced a scene of heartrending sorrow and maternal grief which moved the most unfeeling to tears and woke up the hitherto unconscious sufferer. But to all the affectionate appeals and loving questions of his parent he only answered: "Mother, do forgive your bad boy; oh, do forgive me, mother."

"Yes, my darling son, I forgive you from my sore heart, though you caused me many a sleepless night. Oh, why did you stray off from your mother's care, to associate with strange people who you knew never could love you like your mother? Oh, even now, if you come back, it is not yet too late. I have room in my heart for you still. Oh, my poor boy, my poor, murdered, lost boy. I thought I would never see you in this terrible plight. Oh, won't you come home with me? answer. Ah, he does not hear me now; he is again relapsed into unconsciousness."

"Madam," said the Elder, "allow me to tell you that the doctor said it would be dangerous to remove him from where he is till after the fever abates that is on him."

"Ah, good sir; I do not care what the doctor has said, I must have my son home from this place."

"Don't you fear but he will have the best of care, for he is among those who honor and love him. But after the effects of this accident are over, which I hope will be soon, then of course he can go home."

"You are very kind, sir. But I must have him home and away from this house immediately, even if he dies on the way. Come, young men," she said, addressing her companions, "help me to carry my boy to the wagon and lay him on the bed contained therein, and thus we can have him carried."

The young men hated to refuse the matron, but yet Mulcahy was of the opinion that it was not safe to remove him in his present condition. Hence he began to remonstrate with the old lady about the imprudence of her design. But while they were talking the priest entered, and going over to the sufferer felt his pulse and examined his condition, and after having made a diagnosis unfavorable to the removal, he prevailed on his mother, for the present at least, to leave him where he was at the Spoones mansion,



CHAPTER XXXI.

THE PRIEST AND THE PARSON IN FRIENDLY CONVERSATION.

WHEN the Irish priest of the Irish settlement had arrived to administer the consolations of religion to the wounded young man, Mulroony, alias Ronay, there were present at his bedside, besides his afflicted mother and sympathizing compatriots, all the Elders of the neighborhood, including, of course, the presiding Elder, Bull, and wife, and several of the leading members of his meeting-house. Besides these, there was present also the notorious Professor Hoskey, one Tommy the Donkey, an Irish apostate and sot, and a few more persons of no consequence, all anxious to claim the credit of the conversion of the sufferer to the Methodist Church. As soon as the priest entered, he was immediately conducted by Mrs. Mulroony to the sofa-bed on which her son rested, where, upon having felt the patient's pulse, and otherwise made a diagnosis of his condition, his reverence came to the conclusion

that there was no danger of death, and therefore declined to administer those religious consolations which are never to be imparted except to persons who are "*in articulo mortis*," or imminent peril of dissolution.

Having sat down on the chair politely set before him by Miss Spoones, the priest replied to the question asked, as to whether he thought Ronay was dangerously ill, that he thought not, but that he would recover, his pulse indicating a very favorable state of his general health. It was a very melancholy event however, he added, and ought to be a lesson to those who were too free in the use of fire-arms.

"That is true enough," replied the presiding Elder, "fire-arms should be handled *keerfully*, but, had his advice been taken, and had the party devoted their whole time at the Lake to prayer-meetings, this accident could not have happened."

"I suppose not, indeed," replied the priest, smiling. "Had there been no fire-arms used he could not have been shot, and had there been no excursion, there would have been no chance of the shooting occurring. The responsibility unquestionably," he added, "rests on those who, notwithstanding the adverse opinion of the most respectable portion of the community, persist in encouraging those camp-meetings, and rural religious love-gatherings, which, under the devotional services of the Methodists, and a few other sects, are the laughing-stock of almost all other religious bodies."

"I must beg to differ with you in opinion regarding camp-meetings, and what you regard as rural religious gatherings," rejoined the Elder. "Our camp-meetings symbolize and continue those great gatherings of believing men, women and children, who went into the wilderness to hear Jesus when he was on earth. And I hope I shall never see the day when the camp-meeting, as a means of grace, shall fall into disuse."

"Good, good for you, Elder," interrupted Hoskey. "I must give my opinion in favor of the camp-meeting. I confess I like the camp. And, when I could not stand half an hour to hear the best sermon that ever was delivered in a meeting-house or church, I confess that the camp-meeting has many charms for me. Yes, I do declare it; give me the camp-meeting before all other religious services."

"Shut up, sirrah," said the priest, sternly; "how dare you address yourself to me, or even come in the presence of any decent people! I do not want to have any conversation with such a renegade as you! I am now speaking to the Elder and not to you, and if you interrupt me a second time, I shall rise and leave this house, if you are not kicked out of it!"

"Oh, of course," answered the Elder. "I do not wish you to interrupt my talk with the priest again, Hoskey. I can talk with you any time, but it is not every day I can see a priest, to talk to him.

I believe we were on the subject of camp-meetings," he resumed. "I consider them, as I stated just now, one of our best institutions to bring men to Christ. The conversions made at camp-meetings every year are far more numerous and important than all the converts we receive into our church by all other sources, revivals included, for people come to the camp-meeting who never go to the church."

"I have no doubt that you receive accessions thereby, but I doubt very much if people who join you under such influences are *really* converted. Excitement leads to enthusiasm and delusion, but seldom does the strayed sheep, that returns to fold under the influence of excitement, long persevere within its salutary restraints. When the excitement cools off, the sinner goes back to his old haunts and errors, and his second condition becomes worse than his first."

"Here we join issue again; and, sir, Zaccheus, the publican Jew, was under the excitement when he was converted to Christ. Hence he was up in the sycamore tree, and, from the midst of the leaves and branches, as it were, he came down, and became a disciple of Christ, and gained salvation."

"He may have been under excitement; no doubt his heart was excited to contrition. But, after he came down from the tree, and his excitement, as you call it, was over, behold the fruits of his conversion. The fruit was there, as well as the leaves. 'Be-

hold,' he said, 'one-half of what I have I give to the poor, and, if I have wronged any person, I return him four-fold.' How seldom do we hear any pious follower of camp-meetings, after his mock conversion, restoring his ill-gotten goods to the owner, or dividing his patrimony or income with the poor. There is, certainly, great noise made at such gatherings—'great cry and little wool.' But all ends in smoke; when the noise is over and the excitement is over, it is all over, except, indeed, you claim as a blessing and a fruit to be appreciated the increase to the census of the population, which, they say, results from every camp-meeting that is held."

"*They say* many things that are not true. But, even granting all you state to be true, is not a camp-meeting, with a professed religious end in view, as good, if not better, than the dances, picnics, bazaars and excursions which are carried on under the auspices of your church. In the camp-meeting accidents may occur; no human institution is perfect. The population, if you will have it so, may be increased. But at your church-gatherings, or excursions, or picnics, the population is *diminished*. It is not often when such events happen, that somebody or other is not killed, maimed or hurt. Our camp-meetings seldom or never end in a fight."

"I must concede to you that such accidents take place occasionally, and I do not defend those

contrivances to raise funds for charitable objects, but these picnics, fairs and excursions, are not set on foot like camp-meetings, for the conversion of sinners, or direct means of grace, as you call them. They are only devices originated by the benevolent for the promotion of useful and charitable ends."

"What a nice figure one of the twelve apostles would cut, could it be possible to suppose him holding a festival in the woods where lager-beer was retailed at ten cents a glass, and worthless counterfeit jewelry raffled off at fifty cents a chance. And then after the beer was drank, and the poisonous candy sucked, and the money all safe, the whole party would end in a fight, or a promiscuous fisticuffing! This I often witnessed at rural feasts presided over by your church or churchmen; and for scandal, I think can beat all the camp-meetings I ever heard of, all to pieces."

"I am not defending these abuses you point out, though I deny that my church directly recommends, much less sanctions, such abuses. These festivals are generally conducted by the laity, and got up by them for charitable purposes, and can by no means be called religious institutions like your camp-meetings. If abuses take place in conducting them (and I allow that there are abuses sometimes) the church is not, nor are the clergy, responsible for such irregularities, for they occur in opposition to both. But your camp-meetings are different affairs. They are avowedly a part,

and as you state, very useful part, of your religion. Hence, your church is directly responsible for all the abuses that flow from them, such as the many who become insane under the excitement of the furious declamation of such revivalists as Finney, Moffat, and others, not to speak of the well-known fact that pickpockets, gamblers and "women of the town" are generally mixed up with your saints at such gatherings. I never was at a camp-meeting in my life, and I take my data in regard to them from the testimony of respectable Protestant journals such as the *New York Churchman*, as well as from highly-respectable gentlemen, lay and cleric, of the same religious persuasion, who are not a whit less opposed to camp-meetings than I am. Have we not instances here in this very town of what sort of *conversions* take place at such gatherings? Was it not at your camp-meetings in the vicinity of this village that the now wretched Miss Nellie Spittle became a convert and made the religious acquaintance of that bad young man Hanks, who gained her confidence under pretence of devotion, deceived her by a promise of marriage, and finally ruined and deserted her on the streets of St. Paul? And to come a little nearer home, was it not at camp-meetings and religious social gatherings that that accomplished ruffian Hoskey, who interrupted me a few minutes ago, got acquainted with all those young silly girls, so many of whom he boasts of having ruined, until, as you are aware, the entire

county is scandalized, shocked and disturbed by the narrations of his scandalous seductions and infamous vauntings?"

"I will not contradict what you assert about some of the people who come to our camp-meetings, but 'Of such is the Kingdom of God.' If such people come, let them. May not some of them become converts, and become Magdalens and Marys of Egypt. I could point out to you many instances in which gamblers, house-breakers and prize-fighters became very good men, and very efficient preachers in after life. Ned Buntline is an instance in our own country, and there was a famous burglar in London who is now one of the first-class preachers and revivalists in that modern Babylon. Christ came to call all men, and especially sinners. I allow that Hoskey's conversion was not a good one. He has become a backslider, and turned out bad. But he was bad under Catholic teaching. It was before he joined us that he was guilty of the horrid crime of s—(that can't be named). We are not accountable for the antecedents of all our converts, and as we refuse none, it must be that the Methodist *net* will often include some bad fish among the good. This Professor Hoskey is one of these bad fishes. He may be called a scabby sheep, but as he is now known, he can deceive us no longer. We will have a look-out for him. If I had known that he was to be one of our party in the excursion to Lake Min-

etonka, I should not have permitted him to be among us. It is rather strange, however, that with his well-known antecedents, and his notoriously bad record among the girls of your settlement, he has so many friends among your own people; that he has been elected to office by your own people, and that if he gets a wife he must take one of your Catholic young ladies, for I assure you that, after the exposure of his doings in the lower towns of our *keounty*, none of our Methodist girls, not even the colored wenches, would come within forty rods of him."

"Elder, I concede most of what you state to be true. Certain it is that the now notorious Professor Hoskey was baptized a Catholic. But that is all the church had to do with him. He owes what he is good and bad to his education in your common schools. It is in those seminaries that the seeds were planted of those terrible vices and unmentionable crimes which have now rendered him infamous, and will 'damn him to everlasting fame.' There, in public schools, he learned to despise religion and blaspheme God. There he got acquainted with most of these silly, but once innocent girls, whom he now *boasts* of having ruined. There his heart was corrupted, his brow hardened, and his tongue was trained to the language of blasphemy, dissimulation and perjury. He is a most accomplished graduate of the public schools. He deserves the highest distinction of

godless eminence that they can confer. He ought to get the gold medal for being the most completely accomplished graduate of godless education that ever issued from the four walls of our godless schools. He is the '*ne plus ultra*' of ruffian and infidel distinction of the public schools. He deserves to be called 'The Professor' while he lives, and when he dies, he ought to be placed on an equestrian statue, and a copy of his effigy placed in every one of the public schools of the state and the nation."

"Are you not too hard on the unfortunate Professor, Mr. Priest?" said the Elder.

"Not at all," answered his Reverence; "that very Professor is the cause of the sad fate of this young man, who lies here before us wounded. This old lady here in grief, his mother, will bear me witness, that it was this scoundrel Professor that first led him from being a loving, obedient child of his good parents, to become a reckless dissipated young man, who went all round the country led by this Professor, to frequent dances, sociables and other nocturnal gatherings. Nay, it was through this man's deception and evil influence that this old lady is now a heart-broken widow, covered with the melancholy weeds of her mourning, for it was in the Professor's company that her husband, the good Mr. Mulroony, imbibed the liquid poison that killed him."

"I kan't stand that talk against Mr. Hoskey,"

exclaimed the filthy wretch called "Tommy the Donkey." "Although you are the priest, I must give you the lie. I knowed Mr. Mulroony well, and it was the frast that kilt' im, and not the Professor."

"Be silent, Tommy," said Miss Spoones. "Get out to your work; you have no business here; the stable is your place."

"I kan't hear me friend, the Professor, run down. He is goin' to marry a cousin iv mine, and I von't hear priest or minister run 'im down."

"Be off, you wretch," said the young man, Mulcahy, "or I will kick you to the stable, or the sty, of which you so strongly smell. Avaunt, sirrah."

"Let the poor brute alone," said the priest. "He knows no better; you cannot expect any better from that illustrious specimen of Darwin's theory. He naturally defends the Professor, for the degraded brute is a victim of his impious principles, and a convert to his godless teaching."

"He is a very ferocious animal, your Reverence, and may attack you when you go out, as he threatens that he will do."

"He may threaten or assassinate me, but he cannot intimidate me. We had better retire from this place, however, gentlemen," said the priest, taking his hat. "It is not safe to be in the vicinity of such ferocious animals. I bid you all good day."



CHAPTER XXXII.

A DEN OF CONSPIRATORS.

IT was often said by Father John, that wherever a church was erected in honor of God, *there* was sure also to appear in some shape or other a place dedicated to Satan.

This aphorism, the good priest used to say, was of universal application, no matter how enlightened, religious, or educated the inhabitants were, "where God had his church, Satan had his synagogue." And we must not suppose that the first settlements on the far prairies of Minnesota were an exception, or exempt from the malediction of this mysterious dispensation of the permissive will of Providence. There were not only *one*, but several of these "dens of Satan," in the shape of "saloons," "groggeries," "card and dice whiskey bars," and "stores," in the neighborhood of the fine church which lifted its gilded cross aloft towards the stars on that fair prairie of Saint Patrick. In a former chapter we spoke of one of these "dens" which was *run* by

Madam Mastiff, the favorite resort of Professor Hoskey, and his low crowd of brutish admirers. There were, beside the Mastiff resort, also two or three other dens, no way inferior to the Mastiff firm in infamy and incentives to vice and drunkenness. One was presided over by a bloated brute, an ex-pedagogue, named "Mickey the Miser," and like the *place* for which it acted as a seminary, it was open day and night, week-day and Sunday. The blasphemies, the maledictions, and the riots which took place in "Mickey the Miser's" den were really fearful. Yet the wretch had his wife and children in the upper part of the building, where such indescribable scenes of riot, blasphemy, and bloodshed took place almost daily. "Long Neddy" kept a place next door to Mickey, but as he was not so lost to blame as the former, though not a whit more honest, he always closed his "den" during Mass time. "Bandy-legged Pete," called in the Celtic "*Pather na Snaugh*," kept a third place in the vicinity. In each and every one of these traps for the ruin of the simple countryman, not only was bad whiskey retailed at enormous profit on Sundays, but all the conspiracies, plots, and secret schemes for carrying on the designs of such wicked men as Hoskey and his associates were resolved upon and matured.

At one time, the end proposed was to destroy the threshing-machine of some stranger who was willing to do the work of the farmers cheaper than

it could be done in the settlement. A meeting was held at the saloon of one of the above worthies, "Mickey the Miser's," "Long Neddy's," or "Pather na Snaugh's," and at once a number of villains volunteered to destroy the machine of the rival thresher. Again, a shiftless farmer wished to draw his insurance for a quantity of damaged wheat, which was rotting in his barn. A few dollars were spent at any of the above-mentioned saloons, and on the same night the barn was burned. Professor Hoskey was the head of the gang of incendiaries and murderers, and woe betide the farmer who was not his friend.

On the present occasion, in reference to the insult offered the Professor by the priest, in ordering him out of his presence, at the bedside of Mulroony, the victim of his cunning malice, the meeting was held at the saloon of the degraded wretch, "Mickey the Miser."

Besides the Professor, there were present "Tommy the Donkey," "Billy the Boy," "Pather na Snaugh," and "Anthony the Dribbler."

The question laid before this drunken cabal was how to avenge the injury done to the Professor by the priest, who seemed ever to stand in his way in carrying out his design of bringing the whole population over to his own advanced ideas about education. The Professor was a man of unbounded vanity, and, because he could read, write and count (though he could spell but indifferently), he re-

garded himself as a prodigy of learning. Though he was a nominal Catholic only, yet he claimed that he knew as much about the doctrines and practices of the Church as the priest. He often made speeches in school-houses to the gaping crowds of half-drunken old men, who were his only auditors. He told them that he read the Bible for himself, and that he could discharge all the duties of the priesthood as well as any of them, if he had only a "white gown, a rope, and a pewter chalice." He also declaimed against having the Catechism taught, saying that the Catechism was the work of the priests, but the Bible the word and work of God. These occurrences coming to the knowledge of the priest, he felt it his duty to warn his flock against the false teaching, as well as the scandalous conduct, of the Professor. But it appears the priest had warned them too late. Already several of the young men who had neglected their sacramental duties gave a willing ear to the teachings of the Professor; and many of the old drunkards, like "Anthony the Dribbler," and "Tommy the Donkey," drank of the poisonous nonsense of the Professor with the same gusto with which they quaffed his whiskey at the saloons.

"Gentlemen, help yourselves to as much of that *licker* as you want," said the Professor one Sunday night at the saloon of "Mickey the Miser." "I have been awfully insulted yesterday by the priest we have got, but I hope we won't have long. He

turned me out of the very room where my young friend Ronay lay on his death-bed, in presence of all the company, and I declare it, if I had had my revolver with me, I think I would have shot him, so I would."

"Oh, Professor, here's to you. I hope you won't do that; it would give so much scandal to shoot the priest," said "Anthony the Dribbler."

"And fot ov ud, off it vud give schandle, Father Anthony?" said "Tommy the Donkey." "Shure, daicint min must defend themselves onyhow. Give us your hand, professor, that you may live to silence that purriest, I sez."

"I, too, am in favor of givin that purriest a good whalin, but not killing 'im out and out," said Long Neddy.

"And I too," said Pete, or Pather na Snaugh. "He intherfares too much in our lickin bisness. We must get rid uv him onyhow."

"He got me foined eighty dollars last winther," added Mickey the Miser, "and I will give two gallons of my best lickin to have him get a good pounding."

"I'll give three gallons," said Long Neddy.

"I'll give four, and a keg of beer," added Pete.

"Now, gentlemen," resumed the Professor seriously, "I am ready to spend money in this business. If any man here will engage to range a crowd say of twenty or thirty men to assail that priest, I will pay every man of them two dollars, and four jiggers of whiskey."

"Done, I'm your man to find the men," exclaimed Tommy the Donkey.

"You see, gentlemen, the case stands thus," said the Professor. "If I were to attack him myself, I would have to suffer from the law, but if a crowd assails him, who can prove who hit him, and all will come off scot free."

"It wasn't like meeself," said Father Anthony, "to raise me hand against a *purriest*, for I seed in Ireland those who did so had no luck."

"Nonsense," rejoined the Professor. "I have no such fears. Why does not Victor Emanuel have bad luck for what he has done to the Pope? Or even Garibaldi; why does he flourish? That's all nonsense to think that priests are any better than other men. They have no power. I would as soon shoot one of them as a hog or a beast of the woods."

"Listen, gentlemen," he added, getting on his legs, "to all this priest has done to hinder my advancement. I could have been married to a rich young lady, Miss Stokes, but when this priest heard of it, he beat me there, and I seed another take her off. I ran for Superintendent of this keounty; here again he blocked my way. He turned me out of the Sabbath-school, warning the girls to beware of me, and thus shut me out from very *pleasant* society. If there would be a dance or a ball in my neighborhood, he would warn the people so against those dances that there would

not be half-a-dozen couples, and them the homeliest lot in the settlement, present wherever I was floor-manager. And now he has made me so odious in the *kimmunity*, that nobody except the very lowest associates with me, and there is danger that I will be expelled from the Lodge on account of the opinion that prevails of me among the people. If I let this thing go on, I am really undone. I may as well quit this *kimmunity* at once."

"I advise you to quit it, and that as quick as you can," said somebody who heard what was said, and at whose voice the Professor trembled. "Clear out of this, ye gang of plotting murderers, or I will kick ye all high and dry out into the centre of the road."

It was Mickey Bocagh who spoke. He burst into the room where the Professor was dilating on his grievances, and rushing at him, seized him by the collar, and dragging him to the door as he would a dog, kicked him headlong into the street. The rest of the cabal ran for their lives, for they knew very well what mettle he carried in his brawny arms.

"Mickey the Miser" was indignant, though he was too cowardly to complain of being so uncere- moniously deprived of his company, and had to promise the river man that he would never again give countenance or entertainment to the ruffian Hoskey. "That infamous scamp," he said, "has been the curse and plague of the Mulroony family.

It was in his company that the old man drank the poisoned liquor, that caused the accident of which he died. It was this blackguard Professor that corrupted young Mulroony so as to get him to neglect his religion, though he never yet joined any sect. It is that cursed Professor that got up the excursion to Minnetonka, where young Mulroony got shot. And it is more than probable that it was at his suggestion that 'Spike' shot him, but this is yet to be proved. And now I have heard him proposing to some of those drunken followers of his, to waylay and probably assassinate the priest. How is it that you can countenance such vagabonds in your saloon? I tell you what it is, my man," he said, addressing Mickey the Miser, "if you ever again let that ruffian into your saloon, I will punch you severely. Your father, though an ignorant man and an inmate of the poor-house in Ireland, who never eat a cut of flour bread till he came to Minnesota, yet he never would countenance his son, or anybody else, to plot the assassination of a priest."

"I can't help 'em if they talk of that or any other subject in my saloon, it's all the same to me fat they talk of, if I can sell my licker and make money."

"Money, you hound you! Is it for money you live and breathe? Is it for money that you allow murderers to plan a man's death, as if he was a wild beast? I will hold you responsible if

anything happens our good priest—too good to be among such a set of brutes as ye are. I will go now and warn his reverence of his danger, and if I meet any of those assassins, I will pay them my respects, depend on it,” and having said so much, the river man quit the den of “Mickey the Miser.”

“He is too late, now, to warn the priest of what he is going to get, and if he is killed, devil may care, for he is against us licker men,” said the miserly saloon man.

These words were spoken audibly after the honest river man left, and were heard by none, save the wretch who uttered them.

Meanwhile the Professor and his gang adjourned to the den of “Pather na Snaugh,” where they were filled with more liquor, until, from being a low, brutal crowd of savages, without education, religion, or morals, they became, under the influence of drink, more like incarnate demons than men.

The poor priest had remained all night at the bedside of the raving young patient, anxiously praying with his mother, and expecting the return of such a state of consciousness as would enable him to hear his confession, like the good shepherd, and to reconcile him to his offended Maker. Having by God’s mercy accomplished his desire, convinced himself that all would be well with the young man, he was returning home very early in the morning, in order to offer up the daily sacrifice to the Eternal, as was his wont for almost thirty years of his minis-

try, when, behold, as he was passing by the haunts already mentioned in the fore part of this chapter, he was set upon by Professor Hoskey and his gang of inebriate demons, for they were not men, who dragged him from his buggy, struck him on the head and face, trampled on him on the road, and left him for dead on the road-side. The Professor then addressed his aiders and abettors, appealing to God to confirm his oath that the shedding of the priest's blood was the most meritorious act of his life. Then having accomplished the purpose of his conspiracy, he and his gang again returned to the den of "Mickey the Miser," where the Professor washed off the blood from his victorious dagger, and his followers washed out all memory or remorse of their guilty deed in heavy draughts of poisoned whiskey.

The "Commune" of Paris have immortalized themselves for what they did to priests and churchmen in our own day. Let us not suppose that all the bad fame of their satanic acts belongs to them alone.

There were men as bad, though perhaps not so bold, as the members of the Paris Commune, in many countries and many ages in the past. And while the devil is busy, and men are willing to listen to his suggestions, there will be such scenes occurring yearly, if not daily, in the world, as we have described without any exaggeration in this chapter.

It is not many years since the adorable Image of our Lord was dragged through the street and committed to the flames amid the yells of a brutal mob, in a Western town of our young state. There are few who have not heard of the assassination of a priest from a pistol-shot in Ohio a year or two since. Let it not shock the sensibilities of the refined reader, therefore, to learn that such an occurrence as we have recorded may have taken place a few years ago, when men were less under Christian influence than now in a remote corner of the state.

“Tanti Molis erat Romanam Condere gentem.”





CHAPTER XXXIII.

MICKEY BOCAGH'S IDEAS OF CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE
EXEMPLIFIED.

“GOOD morning, Miss Plowden,” said Mickey Bocagh, one Saturday morning, as he met the former riding, accompanied by her little brother, towards the Catholic Church.

“Did you hear the news, Miss?” he added.

“No, I have just come from home, and am going to the church to meet some other young ladies to fix the altar preparatory for the Assumption. What is the news?”

“Why the priest was nearly killed last night on his way home from a sick call. He was attacked by a squad of drunken rowdies, at the instigation, or under the guidance, of the notorious ruffian Hoskey. I suppose there won't be any Mass to-morrow.”

“Why, that is dreadful! Oh, I do not know what the people are coming to. I heard that those secret society men had threatened the priest, but I

did not think that vice, and injustice could triumph over truth and honor in this fashion."

"Talk about truth and honor, and virtue, in the times in which we live! There ain't anything of the kind to be found nowadays."

"I never thought," said the amiable young lady, wiping her face, bathed in tears, "that violence, crime and falsehood could be allowed, by God, to govern people, as I see has lately happened in these parts."

"My dear young lady, you are too inexperienced and innocent to be able to suspect, much less to understand, what wickedness there is in the world. If you were like me, following the river for the last ten years, you would know that crimes and violence govern most men. Nay, more. May we not say, without danger of exaggeration, that lies govern the world? What enables one party of politicians to triumph over another party? The numbers and the boldness of the lies they tell. There is the Holy Father himself, in Rome, is it not by slander and lies that the robber Victor Emanuel first attacked His Holiness, and then he came to seize on His Holiness' property."

"Oh dear, it is too bad, that the wicked should carry the day, and that God should allow them to trample everything sacred under foot," said Miss Mary Plowden. "But mother often told me that many a time the innocent suffer, and the wicked escape. Now we see this illustrated at home."

“Yes, they carry the day. God allows the good to be persecuted for a time, to enable them to secure the crown He has prepared for those who fight in his cause. The wicked have their victory in this world, but God will turn on them some day, when their cup of iniquity is full, and they shall be scattered. They have their day, but it will be of short duration; after the storm, comes the calm.”

“It seems that they are allowed to carry on too long. Who would have thought that our good priest had an enemy? Was there ever one of his cloth who was more attentive to his duties, visiting the sick, preaching and practising temperance, and instructing the children?”

“Certainly, that is well known. But then those liquor men had it in for him, and those secret societies, headed by the notorious ruffian Hoskey, were ready to sacrifice him, or the Son of God if He was on earth, to their malice, and now you see the end Mulroony has come to.”

“No, is he dead? I heard that he was accidentally shot.”

“No, he was not good enough to die. But worse happened him. While sick and speechless, and insensible, out of his head altogether, what did they do but call in a squad of preachers and go through a pretended marriage ceremony between him (Mulroony) and that old jagged Miss Spoones, and she claims him as her husband now.”

“What? you don’t mean what you say, Mich-

ael?" asked Miss Plowden, in a tone of astonishment.

"Yes, Miss, shiver my timbers all into smithereens, if what I tell you is not true, every word. I heard the news from that filthy, but cunning knave, called 'Tommy the Donkey,' who works for the Spoones folks, and who was present when Elder Bull done the marriage ceremony."

"Why, that will kill his poor mother. She blamed those Spoones people for the ruin of her son, next to that odious hypocrite Hoskey, and if she learns that what you say is a fact, it will kill her sure."

"Kill her, it will for certain, and she has heard it already, for this 'Tommy the Donkey' has told it over, and, though he is a notorious liar, whom nobody ought to believe, yet enough has leaked out from other sources to convince me that Miss Polly Spoones is now Mrs. Paran M. Ronay, as sure as my name is Michael Ryan, commonly called Mickey Bocagh."

"Well, then, if she be Mrs. Ronay, how can she be married to Patrick Mulroony? Has she another man living, or is she 'a grass widow,' as they call such people?"

"She may be 'a grass widow,' or, as I call her, a dry hay widow, and be married to a dozen husbands, as far as I know. She is old enough for that, and more. But, as you don't understand, Miss Plowden, I will tell you. When this young

man first met Professor Hoskey, he suggested to him, that instead of Pat, he should call himself Paran, and cutting off the letters 'Mul' from Mulroony, should contract it into 'Ronay,' quite a Frenchified name. This Hoskey himself had improved his name, which was originally 'Whirosky.' The fancy pleased the foolish young man, and now he calls himself P. M. Ronay."

"Oh, that's it, eh? I should think the ridicule he would stand in the company of all his associates and countrymen would deter him from such a foolish alteration of his old Irish name."

"It is all the effect of vanity, Miss Mary. Mulroony, before he met with this accident, used always to shun my company, or if we met on the road, he would look to the other side from where I was, for when we met, I always addressed him by saying, 'How do you do, Pat,' or 'Good morning, Mr. Mulroony,' and these salutations he never liked, especially if there were any of his neighbors near, who always addressed him as Ronay."

"Indeed! I never knew how this happened before; could not imagine who Paran M. Ronay was. I thought he was some foreign German or French Count."

"He is no other than the widow Mulroony's son. God help him. I had a mind to pull his ears for him once or twice, when I saw him laugh when his religion was ridiculed, but now I am glad that I did not touch the poor lad, who is more to be pitied than hated."

"Oh, that was right, Michael," rejoined the timid Miss Plowden. "I don't like when any one, no matter how wicked, is punished. It is so barbarous for one who professes to be a Christian, to assail another like a wild beast!"

"That's true enough, Miss Mary, though I often, God help me, offend in this way; yet I know it is wrong. My temper betrays me, even after I promise in confession not to sin in that way any more. But there is one thing I promised, and *that promise* I will keep, namely, that the first time I meet that scoundrel, Hoskey, who, I am positive, got up the party to waylay the priest, I will surely print the mark of both my knuckles in his hang-dog face, and if, like a dog, he attempts to bite back, I shall bury my knife in his flesh, so help me ——."

"Oh, Michael! for God's sake, do not make such a rash, bad promise! Are you not a Catholic Christian, and does not the Catechism teach, as well as the Bible teaches, that we must love our enemies?"

"Yes, Miss, I know it. I forgive all my enemies, even those who put balls into me, which I carry up to this day in my body. But how can I forgive an infidel and an apostate, who tries to upset religion, and who has boasted that he seduced so many young women, whom I know he slandered, and who does all he can to bring contempt on his countrymen's creed?"

"Oh, Michael, we must forgive all, even those

who slander, assault and rob us. Did not our Lord pray, even, for His persecutors, who scourged His sacred flesh, and nailed Him to the cross? I am sure, from what I know of our good priest, and nobody knows his Christian sentiment better than I do, that nothing would displease him so much as to have any violence done to those deluded people who were wicked enough to raise their sacrilegious hands against his anointed person. I hope, therefore, Mr. Ryan, that you will give up any idea of revenge which you have entertained, and pray to God to convert these people, for, indeed, they need it."

"I would take your advice readily, Miss Plowden, very readily, if the injury was done to myself, or to any ordinary priest, but when I recollect that this priest of ours, God bless him, saved my mother from death when all the doctors from the city gave her up for lost; when I saw her stretch out her dying hands and ask the priest, our persecuted priest, to save her for the love of Christ; when I saw the priest go on his knees, after having laid aside the Most Holy Sacrament which he had with him, but which my mother was not able to receive owing to her complaint; when I saw the good man shed tears; then blessing himself, he rose from his knees and dismissed the surgeons to another room; and when, in ten minutes after I learned that my mother *was saved to us all*; then it was that I learned to value our priest, what

a treasure we had in him. Then I swore that I would die for that priest, if he needed the sacrifice. And this is why I vowed to punish his enemies, or die in the attempt. And I shall do it, if God spares me."

"Oh, Michael, do not think to do anything of the kind. The noblest act of one who is injured is to forgive. It was this that caused the pagan world to recognize in our Lord Jesus the Divine Nature, for, before His time, no one ever forgave his enemies from his heart."

"But, Miss Mary, it is not on account of my mother alone, that I am indignant. The ill-used priest not only saved my mother from the grave and kept me from being an orphan, but there are over one hundred persons in this settlement whom he saved also from an untimely death. He may say to those modern Jews, what our Lord said to the old Jews, "Many good works I have done among you, for which of these do you seek to murder me?"

"Yet, after all the malicious persecutions our Blessed Lord suffered, Michael, at his death, we read how he prayed: Father forgive them. And all the Saints have forgiven their enemies and never took any steps to punish those who slandered, insulted, abused, injured or assailed them. This is one of the tests by which we know that our religion is true and our pastors are genuine, when they imitate our Lord."

“That is true enough, Miss Plowden, but I must confess that I am no Saint or Apostle either, and when a man strikes me on one cheek, I am not ready to turn the other to him, but rather to knock him down and give him a kick or two, if he deserves it. Hence, though I like your advice very well, Miss Mary, and would do all in my power to prove to you that I have the highest respect for what you say, yet, I am afraid that when I meet Hoskey, I greatly fear that I will forget all your preaching and go for that infidel and conceited scamp, as we go for a sneak-thief on board the boats, namely, to write our sentiments of him in legible characters on his hide, and compel him to say his prayers louder than ever he did at his mother’s knees.”

“Indeed I shall be sorry to hear of any more trouble, however much I regret the occurrences of the last few days. I must bid you good morning, Mr. Ryan,” she said, bowing to Mickey Bocagh, “for I feel it is my duty to call at the Presbytery to learn the nature of the injuries which his reverence received at the hands of these barbarous ruffians.”

Mickey went his way, and though he was engaged on a steamboat of the Mississippi, he resigned his berth on his vessel, being determined, if it took him a whole year idle, to watch his opportunity till he could come across those scoundrels who had the impiety to assail a clergyman while in the discharge of his pastoral duties.

The poor river man, though he had for some-

time practised his religious duties, and had a mind that could rise to the dignity of forgiving a generous enemy, yet his soul was still untutored in those exalted notions of religious perfection which teach that the greater the injuries received, and the viler the instruments of their infliction, the higher and the nobler is that sense of Christian forgiveness that condones such injuries, and the more deserving of the crown of immortal glory. These ideas were quite above the comprehension of the indignant river man, and there are many in a higher position than Mickey Bocagh who cannot fully comprehend their sublimity.





CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE LOST SHEEP PERISHES OUTSIDE THE FOLD.

THE poor assaulted priest of St. Patrick's Church suffered intensely from the wounds and bruises of Professor Hoskey and his gang of reprobate ruffians, but his mental pains exceeded those of his bodily injuries when he heard the recital of the afflicted Mrs. Spittle, whose unhappy daughter Nellie, was at the point of death.

In the opening chapters of this narrative, we stated that this young woman became a frequenter of Methodist singing-schools, sociables, and camp-meetings, and finally a *convert*, under the inspiration of a genteel young man, who promised to marry her, but after having ruined, deserted her, on the streets of St. Paul. Her poor mother, notwithstanding her stubbornness and disobedience, rescued her from the infamy of the streets, and she was reclaimed from the lowest degradation that could befall a female. Having returned beneath the maternal roof, her sad mother sought to secure her

reclamation by trying to induce her to receive the sacraments, but, instead of seeking to purify her heart by a good confession and penance, Nellie, under the advice of some of her neighbors, was content to try to improve her mind by going to school. Being of good natural parts, she learned rapidly, and, after a year or two, improved herself so far as to be able to teach school in country districts.

She was now a school "marm," and as the memory of her "*faux pas*" with her seducer died away, Nellie became self-important and wished people to understand that she was "some pumpkins." When reminded by her parents of her religious duties, she gave "the old folks" to understand that she was now of age, and "didn't *want no instructions* in regard to religion nohow."

"Yarra, that's queer talk for you, Nellie, asthore," her mother used to say. "If you don't want instructions about your religion from the priest or the sisters, how can you know what to do in regard to it? How well you had to go to school for many years to learn to read and write and figure, and after all you may not be very good at learning. But you expect to know all about your immortal soul, without any teaching at all at all."

"Mother," she used to answer, "you make me laugh when I hear you, with your Irish brogue, trying to speak English. Before I was *educated*, I thought as you do about religion, and going to con-

fession, and attending meeting, but now, since I *finished* my education at the academy, I have other notions about religion and such affairs."

"Faith, then, Nellie dear," the mother would rejoin, "I doubt your *edjication* *isn't* very parfect, or you would not neglect your first duty, which is that which you owe God. And this we can learn only from our religion and its teachers."

"Old lady, I wish you would mind your own soul, and let me take care of mine. Since I completed my *education* (and I got a first-class certificate for teaching), I have changed my views about religion, churches and ministers. As Professor Hoskey said the other day, at the Corners, where he delivered a speech, standing on a beer-keg, when we are educated we are our own teachers in religion, said the Professor. We don't want no priests or dominies to instruct us. We have the Bible to get our faith out of, if we need it. That's what's the matter, old lady."

"Oh, God forgive you, Nellie. It is nothing short of a Protestant you are when you speak in that wicked style. I'll tell the priest on you."

"I don't care, old woman, what you call me, Protestant or unbeliever, but *them* is my sentiments, and if you go and tell the priest, and bishop too, I care not a straw. Pshaw, what care I for priests or preachers, now that I am *thoroughly educated*? Telling the priest about me, my old granny, is played out. I don't care a snap for him, or

no other man. They are no better than other men, as that clever young gentleman, Professor Hoskey, says at our sociables and in his lectures."

"Nellie, are you acquainted with that black-guard, a man whom the priest excommunicated for a horrible crime? I am sorry, Nellie, that you don't choose better acquaintances than the Professor and his party of apostates. The curse of God will fall on that wretch yet, if for nothing but his cruel treatment of the poor Norwegian girl whom he ruined. You ought to be the last person to speak of that vagabond, for he brought many a poor one to ruin, if we believe himself."

"Oh, my old lady, it is not for his having deceived so many girls that I admire the Professor, but for his independence in getting rid of the authority of priests. The Professor never *done me no* harm, nor service neither, but I love him for his liberal sentiments and outspoken free-thinking."

"Indeed, I am sorry to hear you say you love a bone in the body of that schemer, who only escaped the gallows, or the State prison, for what is reported about him and the *Mare*. Those are poor Christians who learn either religion or morality from the Professor. Let nobody ever hear you, dear, again speak in this wild manner. They would say you, too, were friendly with the Professor."

"Mother, how often must I tell you that I am now *educated*, and that I don't *want no* instructions

from you *nor nobody else* regarding my tastes, duties or companions? I would not take correction from any person in what I say, do, think, or fancy; much less will I take reprimand from you, who don't know '*beans*,' and can't speak a correct word of English. Pshaw, what nonsense!"

"Well, I suppose I don't speak very good English. I can't be blamed for that, for I did not learn it, and it was not my native tongue. But, it appears to me, that, with all your Yankee-puckered mouth, you make a slip, now and again, in grammar. Don't you mind the night the priest was here, how often he caught you in bad English, as when you said, '*I don't want no light*; I haven't got no dictionary'?"

"Yes, that old priest did attempt to correct me, but then at that time my education was not *finished*, and we had *not got none* to judge which it was, me or *him*, who was wrong! I bet, if he ever comes here again, I can soon trip him up in accent and education! But, I hope he shall never cross this door again. I will have no more to do with priests or preachers, since I am now educated as well as they."

"Oh, Nellie, agra. You are to be pitied. And I am, too, who have had the misfortune to be your mother! Oh, my God, did I live to see the day that my own unfortunate daughter should speak to me in this wicked way? Oh, good God of Heaven, and His Holy Mother, look with mercy

and pity on you to-night, my foolish daughter, and on me, your sad, sad mother. Oh, wirra, wirra, Vaughner Dea, tour Courduin. Oh, Virgin Mother of God, come to my aid this night," added the poor woman, bursting into a copious flood of tears.

This scene will give the reader an idea of the *education* which Miss Nellie Spittle had acquired, before she became qualified to become a common-school teacher. She lost her reputation in the first place. Then she lost all reverence for religion, and holy things, and persons; and lastly, she lost the natural love and respect which every rational animal, and almost every animal of the lower creation, generally entertain for their parents. These were the vices which her *education*, taken in a bad sense, implanted in her susceptible mind. She was naturally affectionate, mild, humble, obedient and respectful to parents, and full of faith, reverence and love of God. But now, after the *education* which she received, she became *proud*, skeptical, harsh, unamiable and brutal, especially towards those who ought to command her reverence and love, namely, her poor, affectionate parents. Had she lived, she could not but curse that *education* that had so suddenly and deplorably changed her natural good parts and disposition. But it pleased Providence to cut short her career, and now, while the parish priest lay bruised, weary and sore on his mattress, Miss Nellie Spittle lay at death's gate, in obedience

to the mysterious summons of her Creator. Like the barren fig-tree, she was allowed no longer to encumber the ground of God's holy vineyard.

"Nellie was given up by the doctors, your reverence," said her mother, who was talking to the wounded priest, "and if you can't attend her, your reverence, and I fear you can't, on account of your wounds, I fear my poor unluckly daughter is lost forever."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Spittle," answered the priest, "I shall have to attend her, no matter whether my wounds will be made worse or not thereby. The dying we must attend, even at the risk of our lives. But, has she sent for me? If not, I would not go, for I have heard, indeed it is well known, she joined those camp-meeting people, and as I am for the widest liberty of conscience, even so far as letting a man go to perdition, if he wishes, I am not willing to visit your daughter unless she intimates her desire to return to the faith of her youthful days. Did she tell you to come for me?"

"Well, your reverence, I can't say she did. But I spoke a good deal to her these two days, and when she saw me cry so much, she seemed to soften a little, and to be willing to gratify me. Says she, 'Mother, dear, do not cry any more, and I will do anything for you. I hate to see you shed so many tears!' She then kissed me and asked my pardon for having offended me. And, as soon as I saw her in that state of mind, I came off without

more ado for your reverence. So, I hope you will come to see her, for God's sake. Try to fetch back the strayed sheep to the fold of Christ."

"I will go with you, my good woman. But, I doubt, if it will be of any use. She has been so long among those swaddlers, or roaring Methodists, and so flattered by them for her *independence* and *enlightenment*, that I fear she won't get the *grace of God* to die the death of the just. Go you ahead, before me, and I shall be there within an hour, and, of course, I will be able to judge for myself, whether or not she repents of her errors and impieties, and is willing to make her peace with God."

The old lady went forward, elated at the expectation that her daughter would be willing to see the priest, repent and confess her sins, and thus die in the bosom of the fold, but the mother was too sanguine of the success that she expected. The brave Nellie, on being informed that the priest was coming, protested against seeing him. She denied that she had any desire for the services of a priest, insisting that her mother misunderstood what she meant when she stated that she would do anything in the world to please her. She stated that she wanted neither to see nor hear the priest, and that if he should come, she would rise up out of bed and shut the door in his face, if she even died in the attempt! She insisted that she was *educated*, and knew what was best for her now as

well as when in health; that she was not, on the last day of her life, going to renounce the principles she had so thoroughly imbibed in the academy; that nothing could change her mind or resolution to die as she lived, without *aid, advice* or *assistance* from priests, preachers or ministers.

These sentiments filled her parents' hearts with unutterable grief, and the priest, when he heard of her determination, shook the dust from his shoes, and returned home in sorrow.

There was one man alone present, like an evil genius, at Nellie Spittle's bedside, whose poisonous tongue uttered a malediction against the priest, and whose "bravo" was the last articulate word which ever sounded in the ears of this poor victim of a godless and defective education! This ruffian was no other than Professor Hoskey, who stole into her room during the confusion consequent on Nellie's refusal to see a clergyman at her dying hour. There stood her evil genius, Hoskey, as it were to sustain the impiety of this victim of his impious teaching, if not, as was suspected, of his libertinism, at the last hour, and he remained there till the breath left her lifeless corpse!

The last word the poor creature uttered was her "*education*," and she died in trying to give utterance to this word, the abuse of which had contributed to her final ruin.

The whole neighborhood was shocked at the unprovided-for death of poor Nellie Spittle. Even

the Methodists, who perverted her to their teaching, were disappointed that Nellie had not given instructions to have her funeral sermon preached by one of their Elders, in their meeting-house. But no, there was no sermon, no sprinkling of holy water, and, of course, no "requiem" over the body when dead, of her who, while living, had refused to be comforted by the sacraments of Christ. The priest, however, to mitigate the grief of the disconsolate parents and sympathizing relatives, allowed her a place of interment in that corner of the cemetery reserved for strangers and still-born infants.

And the parents, as they could not hope to benefit the soul of one who died an unbeliever in the saving mysteries of the church of Christ, erected a fine monument over her remains. On the marble there was not a word said of the life or death of Nellie Spittle. Her age only was recorded on the face of the slab, the place of her birth, and a few other common-place lines carved in bad spelling and cant. But, at the bottom of all were inscribed those old, honored and pious words, "*Requiescat in pace.* AMEN."

Her plot in that corner of the cemetery is kept in neat order, and flowers and evergreens deck the mound that covers her remains. And there is no other grave on which the flowers seem to grow brighter, or the grass greener, than on that of Nellie. Perhaps the reason of this is found in the

fact that every Sunday and holyday in the year, *that* sad grave is watered with the mingled tears of poor Nellie's parents, and her brothers and sisters, who not only lament her as lost to them here in this world, but probably in the next, owing to the blighting influence of a godless and materialistic education. Let her fate be a warning to others who are careless of the education of their children.





CHAPTER XXXV.

STRATAGEMS OF A DESPAIRING LOVER.

WHEN Elder Redtop had heard an authentic account of the recovery of young Mulroony, alias Ronay, and of his marriage to Miss Polly Spoones, he was distracted with indignation and grief, and acted like one deranged in mind. When first informed of the event by Elder Bull, for it was he who broke the news to him, he smiled, hoping that the presiding Elder was only trying to pass off one of his jokes on his junior brother. But when the former assured him that he spoke the words of "truth and soberness," Redtop changed from a rosy red color to a death-like paleness of the face; then he sighed heavily, and finally he sank in a swoon on his office chair! The presiding Elder became alarmed, thinking that his friend had burst an artery, or was seized with a fit of apoplexy; and, after ineffectual shakings and slaps on the palms of his hands, had to leave him alone, while he ran down to the drug-store underneath for spirits and stimulants. The

fumes of *aqua ammonia* soon revived the swooner into consciousness, and a good four-ounce dose of *tincture of capsicum* and French brandy helped to give force—the *vis a tergo*—to his torpid circulation. Without giving any explanation to the bystanders of the cause of the reverend gentleman's illness,—for several were attracted to his room by the noise overhead,—the senior Elder took his leave and departed, followed soon by the remainder of the persons around the room of poor disconsolate Redtop. When he found he was alone, he closed the door of his room, and then for an hour or two gave full vent to his wounded feelings in sighs, sobs and soliloquies, and we are sorry to have to state, in occasional oaths and maledictions, also!

What course remained for him to pursue now? he asked himself. Would he go off and purchase a revolver and ammunition, and seek out his deceiver, and shoot himself in her presence? No, that would never do, he mused; for then his detested rival, Ronay, would be free from the fear that could not but haunt him when he reflected that he overreached him (Redtop) in securing a wife. No, the revolver business would never pay, and as it involved some expense also, our reverend hero banished the thought of suicide in that form as a mere temptation. Laudanum, strychnine, or bichloride of mercury, would do the work of self-destruction as effectually as powder and ball, and a great deal more quiet and cheaper, too. But even

in thinking of those remedies to ease his woes, he lost courage again. He then tried to shake off the sensation of regard that attracted his heart to the late Miss Spoones; tried to snap the cord of love that bound him a slave to that idol of his soul, by saying—"Confound her, what is she, anyhow, but a bundle of dry goods and whalebone, set in artistic shape by the skill of a milliner? Consarn and condemn her, let her go to Hong Kong."

But, after all his curses, resolutions and exclamations of disgust regarding her age, her temper, her habits, and her hypocrisy, he felt within him something that yearned for the society of Polly. There was a *vacuum* in his soul which nothing but her presence and society could fill up.

"What a strange being," he said, "woman is! How uncertain, how fickle, how hard to please! For years I have waited on that false one. I spent my money on her. I lost my sleep in thinking of her. I preached my best sermons, and offered my most moving prayers for her, and under her directions; but no sooner does a newcomer appear, a man, too, far below me in accomplishments, than she forgets all my favors, all my love, all my devotion to her person, turns her back on me, her lover, and marries this foreign puppy, Ronay. Oh! I prayed to the Lord often, but it seems in vain, to give that young lady to me for my wife, and I spent much money in consulting fortune-tellers and the best mediums, to make sure of her love. But now

I have lost all, and shall soon, I fear, lose my life too ! I prayed to the Lord, and He did not hear me. Perhaps if I prayed to some other powers, different from those in Heaven, to the Pagan gods or the deities of Voodooism, as the nigger prophet advised me once, I might have secured my Polly. But now she is another man's wife, confound her soul and body."

After such soliloquies as the foregoing, the poor distracted man would kindle into indignation and deliver himself of such a string of oaths and maledictions as would do credit to the famous blasphemer "Tommy the Donkey" himself.

After having exhausted his vocabulary of oaths and imprecations, he became calmer, stretched himself on his bed, and there at his ease, after having viewed the situation all over and on all sides, he formed a plan of a serio-comic character, which he determined to carry out immediately. There was an old single-barreled pistol in the drawer in his table, and this he took out and examined ; and finding the weapon loaded, he carefully drew the charge, taking care to have the barrel emptied out completely. He then charged the barrel with a small quantity of powder, and over this he dropped in a few patent medicine pills he found in a corner of his drawer. "Now," he said, as he placed it in his left breast pocket, "we'll see what we will see. I will go before her armed with this, and pretending to shoot myself, I will find out her feelings to-

wards me. She always told me she loved me, and gave me the best proof that she did in accompanying me everywhere, that I wished to take her. Perhaps she has married this blasted Irishman for some scheme or other, or to get his property. Polly was always great on speculation! But we shall soon find out whither she is a base deceiver or a clever, deep calculatin' lady, who by this marriage seeks to raise me and herself in the world. The *fortin-teller* told me as much as that she would act so, and that I would be yet very rich without having to work for a livin'. Here goes to prove the truth or falsehood of all those preditions regarding my good luck."

The Elder, armed with his pistol and set speeches, set forth at his usual rapid pace, and in ten minutes he was at the mansion of Madam Spoones, which he entered without rapping, with the familiarity of a member of the family.

The old lady encountered him in the hall, and he addressed her by exclaiming: "Mrs. Spoones, where is my Polly? I wish to see her immediately."

Scarcely had he ended his words when Madam P. M. Ronay presented herself, and then commenced a scene which, to spare the sensibilities of the reader, we must not attempt to describe literally. Redtop lifted his hands to Heaven in protestation of the depth and sincerity of his love. He wept, swore and prayed by turns, till he became nearly exhausted. He sank on both his knees and pros-

trated himself on the floor in his efforts to embrace the very feet of his "now lost lady-love," as he called her. He was finally raised up by aid of the two ladies, mother and daughter, and placed on an easy-chair in the parlor. He remained there a few moments, silent and gloomy, the two ladies affecting profound grief, till finally standing up, he drew the pistol and discharged its contents in the direction of his heart. A liquid of crimson hue flowed from his side. He fell prostrate on the carpet. The two ladies screamed and rushed from the room, calling on some men in the yard to come to lift the suicide.

"Oh, dear, how dreadful he acted," exclaimed the old lady. "Oh, my heart is ready to fly away through terror and fear."

"I never would have thought he had courage to do it, mother," answered the new-married lady. "Don't you believe now, mother, I feel sorry for the poor fellow? He loved me so ardently, he did, mother."

"You are well rid of him, my dear," answered her mother. "Won't Ronay be glad when he learns his rival made away with himself? I am sure *he* will. Indeed he will."

"No, I guess not, mother. I would not like him if he rejoiced in my dear Redtop's death. He was very fond of me; distractedly fond of me. Indeed he was, mother. Let us go back to see if he is dead. Poor fellow. My dear Redtop, do you know me?"

He answered, "Oh, oh, do I know you, my own Polly? Who else would I know? Come and kiss me again before I die."

"Where did the shot take effect, my dear Redtop?" she asked, weeping.

"Oh, here at my heart. But I think it did not penetrate a vital part. You were in my heart, and you saved me."

"Oh, don't die; don't do so any more, and I shall love you better than ever. Live for your own Polly."

"Oh, I am now well, Polly, dear. You have healed my wound by that word, that you shall love me, will be mine notwithstanding your marriage to Ronay."

"I guess you are not dead yet, Elder," said one of the men who raised Redtop up. "Ha! ha! ha! this is queer blood you give out of your heart, being nothing but a little red-currant syrup. See, here is the vial out of which it came. I'll be *dogoned* if this is not funny suiciding. Oh, Jehovah, what heroes we meet nowadays!"

"Blast my *heyes* if what you say *hain't* true, Meyers," exclaimed an Englishman named Serl, who helped to lift up the suicide. "I'm 'anged if this is not the queerest country, blast it, on *hearth*, where they *suicide* without being 'urt, and give out claret and currant-jelly instead of blood. Oh, that is what I call play *hacting*, and not suiciding, and darned queer play *hacting* it is."

"Men, ye say nothing about this outside, at your peril. It would injure our family in the public estimation. Let *mum* be the word now, good men," said Mrs. P. M. Ronay. "I insist on your silence about the accident."

"Well, then, give us a quart of *hale*, or something else good to drink, if we must keep *mum* on this rich scene o' *haccidence*, as you call it," replied the John Bull.

"Yes, you can have all you want to drink. But recollect if this goes beyond this house, you are both dismissed. Here are two bottles of my own home-made wine, four years old, one for each of you. We have no ale in the house."

"Thank you Miss."

"*Madam*, if you please."

"Oh yes. Beg pardon. I forgot you were now Mrs. P. M. Ronay," answered John.

The stratagem of the distracted minister seemed to have succeeded, for whoever would have observed Elder Redtop leaving the hospitable mansion of Madam Spoones next morning, would have seen in his countenance and whole demeanor a remarkable change. He was yesterday pale, excited, fidgety and disturbed in all his movements. To-day he appeared calm, cheerful, resigned and happy, with a smile on his lips. What had happened during the time he remained in that house, after his mock suicide, we do not care to relate, though we could do so. But it was evident that

the struggle was over in the breast of the Elder. He no longer walked like a crazy man. His apparel was not neglected. His looks were calm. His speech even was more rational. His appetite improved. He kept his hair and beard more neatly trimmed, shaved and dyed. In a word, Elder Redtop was happy for the first time in several years! And this change for the better; this joy that beamed from his face; this happiness that diffused itself all over his reverence, was all caused and communicated to him during this first night after her marriage that he remained under the roof of the comfortable mansion of Madam Spoones, the mother of the once elegant Polly Spoones, now the wife, according to Methodist ceremony, of P. M. Ronay, alias Patrick Mulroony, of Irish settlement in Minnesota. We have heard of men who were so sad and miserable as in one night to have all the hair on their heads turn from jet black to gray or snowy whiteness, but it has seldom happened that, as happened to Elder Redtop, a man, from being at the lowest depth of misery, ready to commit suicide, became perfectly happy in one night. But this certainly happened to the Elder, and must be mainly attributed to the plan of mock suicide which he conceived and carried out so as to test the affections of his lady-love. He tried fortune-tellers and mediums "time and again," but all to no purpose. It was only by trying the heroic and tragic, though his episode fell

far short of the reality. It was in this line that success attended Rev. Elder Redtop, and he felt rejoiced to think that his success was likely to last.

This day marked a new era in his life, and he felt assured that his course in future would be onward and upward, and this conviction it was that made him perfectly happy, in a worldly sense.

The following is a specimen of the explanation which took place between the Elder and his friend, now Mrs. P. M. Ronay: "My dearest Polly, I thought this would be the last thing you would do, that is to say, getting married to Ronay, when you knew we were so long engaged, and I loved you so well."

"I was not, my dear Elder, inclined to this step, you ought to understand. It was only in obedience to the advice of friends, especially our most zealous ministers, that I took this step. You see I have succeeded in detaching Ronay and several others of the Catholics from Popery."

"You haven't, have you? Who are they?"

"There is, besides Ronay and Professor Hoskey, one Mr. Sheyne, a store-keeper, and several young girls—Miss Mastiff, Susy Early, and others. These have all left the Catholics, and it is to complete my work of conversion that I joined myself to Ronay. This step was necessary to the success of my plans."

"Oh, I see it all now. I can now account for

your *apparent* slighting of me. It was all from hatred of popery, and to increase our Methodist flock. I hope you will have *more* success against the power of antichrist."

"Success! no fear of that. Why already several have left the Catholic school for my academy. And only of late the priest is become so unpopular on account of opposing common schools, that a body of men, headed by one of my pupils, Professor Hoskey, lately almost murdered him."

"Is that so? This is glorious news."

"Why, Redtop, you don't hear nothing; what I tell you is true. I have worked it so, through our sociables, singing-schools, night spelling-schools, sewing-bees, and other lady societies, and through circulation of such books as '*Portrait of Popery*,' '*Maria Monk's Disclosure*,' and the '*Escaped Nun's Narrative*,' all of which Professor Hoskey handed round to be read by Catholic girls, that there are many of them who gave up going to confession, and some of them, like Nellie Spittle, refuse to see a priest on their death-bed."

"Let me kiss your hand for that. You are, the Lord be praised, a glorious apostle of our Evangelical faith. What a triumph, that a Catholic lady died without seeing her priest!"

"Yes, my dear Elder, and the children even now all over the Irish settlement refuse to salute the priest by taking off their caps as they used to do, and some of the older ones even curse the old priest."

“Well now you have made grand progress toward Evangelical religion among the Irish Catholics. More power to you from the Lord.”

“I will tell you a secret, Elder, my dear. I married this Ronay to get the one-third of his property. He is worth thirty thousand, and by this little stratagem I get the handsome sum of ten thousand as my dowry, and a chance of the *hull* property in case he should die, or anything may happen so that I could inherit all his property. Don't you see the game I am after?”

“I do that. May the Lord favor your plans; they are noble, high, and honorable, my dear.”

“Now we must part for a while; good-by.”

“Good-by, till we meet again.”





CHAPTER XXXVI.

“O for a tongue to curse the slave,
Whose treason, like a withering blight,
Comes o’er the counsels of the brave,
And blasts them in their hour of might.”

“**G**OD save all here,” said young Mulcahy (called “the Doctor” by his companions), as he entered, one Sunday evening, into Mr. Plowden’s house.

“And you likewise. How do you do, Mr. Mulcahy? Take a chair sir,” responded Miss Mary Plowden.

“Hallo, Hogan, Kennedy, Haley, and you, Nick! what in the world brought ye all here together?”

“The same that brought yourself, man, our feet, and to see the ladies, of course,” replied Riordan.

“I know well that *that* was *your* business here Nick, without your telling me. Sure enough, there is quite a bevy of young ladies. How do you do, Miss Lee? Miss Fish? Miss Fenn?” he said, taking each successively by the hand. “What news from

Mulroony's? you live near that family. Has Paran M. got along his bride yet to her new home?"

"News, is it? I have nothing else but news. And that of the most exciting character and thrilling interest almost every hour of the day!"

"Has the old lady yet heard of her son's marriage, or is it true that he is married? for one can hardly believe anything that is reported nowadays, except it be vouched for by some respectable person, Mr. Mulcahy," said Miss Mary Plowden.

"Indeed, Miss Mary," he answered, "it is *too* true, and his mother has been informed of all its circumstances, and more than actually transpired, by that accomplished coxcomb and disturber of the peace, Hoskey. Excuse me, ladies and young friends, if I tell you that I never had a stronger temptation to *curse* that infamous scamp than I have at present—aye, every time I think of his conduct."

"Well, well, how smooth he appears when addressing a young lady," said Miss Lee.

"But, after his connection with this Methodistic marriage outrage, no young lady, I hope, will ever salute the wretch again, or deign to look at him."

"Indeed, none who has any self-respect for herself would salute him long before his connection with this Mulroony scrape," remarked the mild and modest Miss Fish. "Since his exploits among the Swedes and Norwegian lasses," she continued, "no

Irish-American or Catholic young lady would even go to a party where Hoskey would be admitted, as there were few people so dead to their own honor and the respect they owed their families as to admit such a conceited puppy as him among their guests."

"Ladies and gentlemen, I was present at the legal investigation in Judge Black's court where Miss Polly Spoones came to prove her marriage to young Mulroony, and she would have been defeated, have utterly failed to prove that she was his wife, for the man was unconscious when the mock ceremony was gone through; but lo and behold! when the woman, backed by her parsons and friends, was about to be scouted from the court-room, and the case going to be dismissed, up comes the perjured wretch, Hoskey, and swears that he was present and heard Ronay repeat the marriage words in distinct form!"

"And perhaps the vagabond wasn't present at all at the marriage," remarked Riordan.

"Of course he was not. He was no more there than you or I; he was miles away, over in Wisconsin at the time."

"Oh is not that dreadful to think of," exclaimed the young ladies. "He ought to be tried for perjury."

"But was not the spooney, Pat Mulroony himself, willing to marry that old maid? were they not engaged, and did he not hang around her hoops like a spider around a wounded fly?" asked Riordan.

“Yes, he was undoubtedly promised to her; at least I have heard so. But not at that time, or under those circumstances did he wish to marry her—when he was wounded, unconscious, and his life despaired of! Mulroony’s Irish blood, spooney though he be, in being attracted by the faded charms of Miss Spoones, could not put up with this piece of jugglery, that made him a married man without his consent or knowledge. Evil will come out of it. They may be married, and he may now consent to take her as his wife, but, to be happy with her, he never can.”

“So his mother, the poor old pious lady, has heard it all?” inquired Miss Plowden.

“Yes, and here, too, I condemn Hoskey’s conduct. After the repeated rebukes the wretch received from the old lady, who forbid him ever to enter her house, he had the audacity two days since to enter her house again, under pretence of seeing his friend, P. M. Ronay. And it was *then* that he took occasion to tell her all about her son’s marriage. The young man, Mulroony himself, wished to conceal it from his mother as long as he could, but this demon in human shape would not rest till he told her of the occurrence, in order to add to her already heavy afflictions! Can you blame me, therefore, my friends, if I often repeat those words of Moore in ‘Lalla Rookh’—

‘O for a tongue to curse the slave!’”

“How did the poor old lady receive the news?”

Didn't she manifest great sorrow?" asked Miss Mary Fish.

"Sorrow is no name for her sufferings. She was literally torn in all her members, nerves and muscles, with sensations of the most painful kind. She next became unconscious, till she was relieved by her tears. Then when the source of her tears was dried up, and the lachrymal glands became shrunk to nothing, she became desperate. She called her two servants, and ordered them to tear up the carpets, and had all the furniture put out of doors and loaded on large wagons, with orders to carry it to the railroad station to have it shipped to the East. Then she visited her orchard and flower-plots and evergreens, and with a small sharp ax attempted to girdle and destroy those splendid productions of nature. But here her good heart rebuked her. She could not sum up courage to injure those tender productions of her care. Hence, instead of hacking, cutting and wounding the young trees which her hands had cared for and her labor nourished, she began to apostrophize and address, kiss and caress them, as if they were conscious of the affection she bore them, saying, 'Farewell, my sweet flowers; good-by my comely apple-trees; adieu my lovely pear bushes and charming evergreens; I shall never see you again, or be delighted by your blossoms, fruits and shades.' Oh, it was really moving. It would make the most savage Indian of a Comanche or Blackfeet tribe

melt in pitying sympathy to witness the old matron's sorrow. Yet old Mudd, Hoskey, and the rest of the rabble who swear by them, were present, sneering, laughing and ridiculing the noble old lady because they envied her superiority and were full of whiskey."

"Was old Mudd there? I thought he was some sort of a decent man," asked Miss Lee.

"I am surprised at old Mudd acting so," exclaimed Miss Mary Fish.

"Decent? Not he, the old blaspheming hypocrite, who, when he is not dead drunk, is ever cursing and swearing. Yet, because he is rich, and can lend money on long time, though at usurious rates of interest, he is the head man in that low locality. His name, Mudd, describes well his nature—low, filthy, obscene, and knavish. Indeed, as for me, I see no difference between old Mudd and his muddy-faced sons, and 'Tommy the Donkey,' the blasphemer, only that one is rich and the other poor, and smells like a pole-cat. They are both equally dirty, equally vulgar, equally ignorant and base, equally dissipated, only they are not equal in their worldly circumstances. That's all the difference between rich old Mudd, who opposes Catholic schools for fear of having to pay something towards their support, and the rest of the low barbarians who are averse to, because they are ignorant of, the advantages of a Catholic education. The low set also go in for the district schools

because an odd one of their children can get employed in them as teachers."

"Where does the old lady, Mrs. Mulroony, intend to go, or has she already left her house?" asked Miss Plowden.

"I believe she intends to spend the remainder of her days, Miss Mary, with her eldest son Michael, who is in wealthy circumstances in the State of New York, near the city of Troy, in a place called Schaghticoke. She has left her comfortable and elegant homestead and gone to live across the strait, in the State of Wisconsin, for the present, not being willing, she stated, to remain one other night under a roof that was to shelter Miss Spoones, now Mrs. Ronay. Oh, she is a very high-spirited woman, as well as a pious matron, who hates hypocrisy and impurity."

"It is a sad thing surely, gentlemen," resumed Riordan, "to witness such desolation in a house so well regulated, and where we were all welcomed by Mrs. Mulroony, as if she was our mother. But this is Professor Hoskey's doings altogether, and if I live to see his hang-dog face once more, I will leave a mark on his ugly mug by which he shall be known forever after! Indeed I will."

"What! will you bite his nose off, as 'Crooked Peter' did to Mucklehead Lofin?"

"No, but I'll leave him some work to employ a dentist on, I'm thinking. He now speaks through his nose. I will widen his mouth so that

he will have room enough to use *it* in speaking."

"Have a care, he carries a couple of revolvers alway on his person, and a huge knife."

"He is too great a coward to use them. His bravery consists in triumphing over silly girls who believe his perjured oaths, and in assaulting unarmed priests in the dark. I won't speak of his exploits in reference to certain *quadrupeds* which he injured, and for which he barely escaped prosecution."

"Oh Nicholas, no more boasting, if you please. We want to see actions, rather than hear words."

"Wait awhile, gentlemen, wait awhile. The wicked won't always triumph," added Riordan, and the conversation ceased.





CHAPTER XXXVII.

A CHANGE COMES OVER THE FANCIES OF OUR GENTEEL HERO.

IF ever any man in ordinary circumstances could say that he was his own master, and had his own way, free to think and act as he pleased—ever successful in carrying out what he proposed to himself to do, without let or hindrance—that man was Patrick Mulroony, alias P. M. Ronay, our ‘genteel’ Irish-American. Well-fed and well-clothed in the fashion of the times, and well-educated according to popular opinion; well-off in the world, and now well-married to a highly accomplished young lady, and well-respected in the community, and, in addition, *well-rid* of all those who contradicted or thwarted his designs, or reminded him of his neglected duties—what more did he need to make him happy? And yet, he was far from being happy. His wife, now snugly settled in the mansion purchased by the virtuous industry of his parents, instead of being the ele-

gant lady whom he admired when done up in the fashions of the dressmakers and milliners, appeared, when stripped of her showy toggery, a very common-place, matter-of-fact, if not a vulgar, woman. The enchantment which hoops and pads, and puffs, and paint, and pomatum gave to his fascinating Polly was all gone, with almost the rapidity of the volatile perfumes and essences that made her presence charming in the ball-room or the sociable party. Besides these external defects, her temper altered also, and the sweet words, the fascinating smiles and languishing looks of earlier days were now succeeded by sharp tones, sour looks, and an assumption of authority and commands that ill-sorted with the demeanor of a mild, amiable and obedient wife. In addition to these sad changes in the person of one whom poor Patrick Mulroony regarded as perfect before he knew her real character, there was such a run of Elders, preachers, colporteurs, tract-distributors, Bible-mongers, and male and female evangelizers, in the house, that it began to look as if he, P. M. Ronay, had no real authority in his own homestead. These people, like locusts, invaded his house day and night, and, like the suitors of Penelope, threatened before long to eat up all its substance. Redtop was there oftener than others. Elder Bull was there occasionally, and Hoskey would be there almost continually, for he loved an abundant table, but that his friend, P. M. Ronay, kicked him out

the next time he came after the departure of his mother. All travelling preachers, fat and lean, ragged and well-clothed, male and female, came to enjoy the hospitality and liberal cheer of Mrs. P. M. Ronay. They never said "by your leave" to the unhappy Ronay himself. He, they fancied, was nobody. The wife was boss. But, they mistook the man's character. He took note of them all, and scanned the looks of the roguish, lying pack, and was determined, like the exiled Ithacan, to clear them all out in a batch very soon.

One morning, after the roarers, male and female, were very noisy the night before, our "genteel Irish-American" hero spoke to his wife thus: "Polly, what in the world do you want with all those noisy people here every night now almost since you came home? I don't like to be rude, but if these low people don't keep clear of this house, I will have to kick them all out, as I did your former pupil, Hoskey, the other day."

"Paran M Ronay," she exclaimed, "what do I hear you say? Are you joking, or in earnest?"

"I am in earnest, Polly, I assure you; very serious, and mean to do what I say."

"Why, what is coming over you? Do you not know all those *holy* people are my friends, and come here, many of them from afar, to pray for your conversion, knowing that that event is dear to my heart?"

"Oh, nonsense, Polly; do you think I am a fool

now, as I was, I confess, when I first listened to your twaddle about conversion? Now I give those wretches timely notice, through you, my lady and their friend, as you say you are, for you seem to be almost always in their company, that if they don't one and all keep away from here, and give up their *dang nonsense* about me and conversion, I will kick them all out severally and jointly, high and dry, on the road, as sure as my name is Pat Mulroony."

"Oh Paran, oh Ronay! what a change is come over you! Oh, I fear the Lord will never change your heart. Oh, I thought you would not speak to *me*, your loved Polly, in this style. Oh! I fear you are not going to be converted, or *that* you will become a backslider, from what you professed."

"No, ma'am, I never will; I never could be converted, as you style it, by such drivelling nonsense and low cant as these degraded, uneducated people go on with in my own house, to my utter disgust and annoyance.

"I will say no more now, seeing that you are trying the old female stratagem of tears and hysterics on me," he added. "I am not now so green as to be affected by such sentimentality as I used to be when I was younger. Shut up now, or retire to your room, for I see two Sisters of Charity coming in the front gate. By the by, one of them looks very like my own loved sister Annie, who joined the Religious seven years since. Oh dear, it is she." He opened the door, and there, sure enough,

stood before him his own sister, now called in religion, Sister Blesilla, and Sister Bona, a German sister of the same habit, who accompanied her. "Oh my sister Annie, welcome to your own old home, your mother's house, and to your brother Patrick's arms. Oh, let me press you to my heart and kiss your holy lips."

"Not my lips, Pat, dear, they are consecrated to our Lord; but my forehead or cheeks, if you please."

"Oh my dear Annie, how good, young, pure, bright and happy you look! Let me kiss your hands, so pure, white and smooth."

"Oh no, Pat. I don't want you to do that, though I know you love me as of old you used to be so good to me, your little Nancy."

"Well, then, I will kiss the cross on these splendid beads of yours, that hang by your side. Oh, sweet cross," he said, his eyes filling with large tears, "how happy are those who worship alone what you represent! Too long, alas, have I lost sight of the glorious cross! I suppose I will have crosses enough by and by."

"Oh, my dear Pat. Where is poor mother? You have not allowed me to ask for her; is she sick? Is she at home?"

"My poor Annie, mother is gone," he said in audible sobs. "Oh she is gone, oh! oh!"

"What, she is not dead, is she?"

"No, no, not dead. But heart-broke from my

foolish, cruel conduct, she left and is gone to live with Michael. Oh, I have not had a day's luck since she left our house. And all our happiness has fled from us since my holy mother left."

"Oh Pat, don't you grieve about her leaving. She is happy, I hope, with Michael. Don't cry so, like a big soft baby, Pat. Be more manly. Oh, but you do look so changed, so sad. What on earth deformed your chin so, as I can see, though the scar is concealed partly by your beard; you used to be a fair, comely boy, Pat; now you look careworn and troubled."

"Oh, I was shot and wounded. It was almost a miracle I lived. I suppose it was your prayers that saved me. I was not fit to die; I must suffer before I am fit to follow Christ."

"Have courage, Pat; have courage. Who is that lady I saw going into the bedroom behind the parlor?"

"That is my wife, Mrs. Pat Mulroony, by your leave. But she re-baptized me P. M. Ronay; made me a Frenchman."

"Oh, then you are married! Why did not you introduce me at once to your wife? you are a queer boy, Patrick; always plaguing people as of old."

"Why, my dear Annie,—I beg pardon, I must call you Sister Blesilla,—my wife, if you please, is a Methodist *saint*, and I must ask her leave before introducing such idolatrous people as Sisters of Charity to her high mightiness."

"Don't talk any more nonsense, Pat; I know now your are gassing; speak common sense; Protestants love the sisters."

"Upon my soul, I tell you the—"

"Oh, Patrick, I will believe what you say without swearing. Come, introduce us to your wife. Sister Bona here is a convert from Methodism, and your wife won't object to see her, I am sure, and I am her sister-in-law. She can't but like to see me, her husband's sister."

The introduction took place, and was very formal on both sides, but though the reception of the Daughters of St. Vincent by the lady of the house was rather uncordial, yet it could not be called uncivil. The two religious remained about ten days, constrained by the master of the house, who literally worshipped them, and when they were departing, placed the handsome gift of one thousand dollars in a sealed envelope in their hands with the injunction that it should not be opened till after the sailing of the steamer on board of which they returned to St. Louis.

While the religious were at his house, they were not annoyed by the noise of itinerary retailers of evangelical wares, for Mulroony placed his man David at the gate to warn all such intruders from the house, and he kept them away.

Besides the presence of the Sisters of Charity, there was another reason why reverend *roarers* were tabooed, and this was, that the lady of the

house was near her confinement, and she didn't desire any *religious* noise to be mingled with the screams and confusion of the obstetrical period in her house. Hence, our "genteel Irish-American," for one month at least, got rid of perambulating preachers and their noise ; and he seemed more comfortable in mind since he resolved to follow out the advice and instructions of his dear sister, and her companion, Sister Bona, both of whom promised earnestly to pray to God for his salvation and conversion.





CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE BREACH BECOMES WIDER THAT DIVIDES THE COUPLE.

ANOTHER event soon occurred in the family of our 'genteel' friend which filled his heart with a brief interval of joy, and which, if anything of this world could do it, ought to have made him happy. He was a father! A fine young boy of *seven* pounds weight (for they placed it in the scales) was born to P. M. Ronay.

He was congratulated on all hands. His wife called him to her bed-side, and embraced him tenderly, presenting him with the little stranger to have him kiss it. Telegraphic messages were despatched, far and near, to the relatives on both sides, announcing the glad event. But a Mrs Williams, who lived a long way down in Wisconsin, near Milwaukee, an aunt of our hero, was the only relative of his who was present, having come all the way to see the young representative of the old respectable name of Mulroony.

On arriving at the town of Brighton by railroad,

she had some trouble in finding any one to give her information of her nephew, for, when asking the townspeople if they knew where Patrick Mulroony lived, they all shook their heads, giving her to understand at the same time that there was no such person in or near the town of Brighton, or "around these diggins," as they expressed it. She went to the livery stable to hire a carriage to carry her to her nephew's place, but they knew of no such man for ten miles around. She inquired at several stores in the village with no better success. At last she went to the chief hotel, kept by Mr. Broadhead, and he not only directed her aright, but, with his usual liberality, drove her out in his own private carriage to her nephew's place.

The nephew received his aunt very cordially, and only smiled when she told him how difficult it was for her to make him out, all the citizens telling her they knew none of that name, Mulroony.

The young heir of the house of Ronay, as he was called, was about a month old when Mrs. Williams arrived, and she was quite indignant when she learned that it was not yet baptized, though the mother had *named* it, calling it "*Younglove Butler Spoones Ronay*."

"That was a queer name surely," remarked Mrs. Williams. But, she added, when it would be sent to the church to be baptized by the priest, he would easily clip off some of those queer long names, and call it decently after some saint.

"No, no ma'am," replied the child's mother; "none of those names will ever be changed, or *clipt*, as you call it, by priest or Pope. I named him 'Younglove,' for my uncle was called thus. I added 'Butler,' for father obtained all his honors under General Butler when he governed in New Orleans. And of course I added our family name Spoones; I could not leave that out, nohow."

"Well, but sure he is not baptized yet," rejoined Mrs. Williams. "You don't want, do you, to baptize as well as to name it yourself, I hope?"

"Yes, I could do it if I wanted to. But I don't believe baptism is a saving ordinance, and I won't mind having it sprinkled till it comes of age to ask for the ceremony, if he likes it."

"The Lord be praised, but you are a curious mother. What if it should die before coming of age, without baptism? Then how would you have to answer the Lord for your cruel neglect to your child?"

"I don't believe no such stuff as that. Anyhow, no popish priest will ever sprinkle or handle any of my children; that's so."

"But what will the father of the child say to these wicked ideas of yours? Will *he* allow his son to be used in this cruel manner? I think not, if he is a Mulroony."

"But he is not a Mulroony."

"Then my nephew is not father of the child, eh? Do you dare to say this in my presence?"

Run, David, and call your boss," she said, turning to the servant boy.

"I did not say that he was not father of the child, I mean your nephew. I only said that Mulroony was not his name ; um ! um ! um !"

"Well, then, who is the father, if not Mulroony? You repeat the same thing over again. This is dreadful talk."

"What I have said is, that he is not now called Mulroony, but 'Ronay.' This is what I meant madam, um ! um ! what a cough I have."

"I understood you in a different sense, and I don't know but you spoke the truth. The truth comes out sometimes, in spite of people. Good God, what brought me to this house? I must clear away from it at once," the spirited Mrs. Williams said, as she quit the room.

Her nephew met her going towards the gate, where she addressed him, saying, "Pat, you *keolaun* (silly fellow) you, what sort of a spoony are you, and to allow that woman inside to use you like a fool? Is that your child within, in the bed; and if it is, why not have it baptized?"

"Indeed, aunt," he answered, "I can't tell you whether the child is mine or not. I begin to doubt. What do you think, aunt?"

"I think, Pat, you are the greatest goose on earth. You allow your wife to name your son and heir with such a string of names as would make a dog laugh, namely, 'Younglove Butler Spoones

Ronay,' with Mulroony left out. Oh, you spoony, you. Only for I knew your mother to be the best woman in the world, I would say you have not a drop of Mulroony blood in your veins."

"I must explain to you, dear aunt. They don't call me Mulroony here, but shortening it, they call it 'Ronay.'"

"Oh, is that it? Well, anyhow you ought to have the child regularly baptized by the parish priest."

"I would, but I have taken it into my head that perhaps I am not its father. Did you observe the color of the bushy head of hair it has on? And also that the nose is turned up. None of the Mulroonys was ever known to have a red head on them; what do you say?"

"Oh, that may be only a rash judgment of yours. Anyhow, whoever is its earthly father, Pat, I would make it have a father in heaven, by baptism right away."

"That is true. Will you take it to the church? She may object, but I guess I am boss here as yet, and shall have it made a Christian, at all events."

"Faith, I don't think you will be boss long here," remarked the shrewd matron.

His suspicions were well founded. The mother did object, and resist vehemently, the taking "*her child* to be sprinkled by a popish priest."

Her husband answered her by saying that he had as good a right to prescribe what was proper for the child as she, he hoped.

She answered that she did not think he had! that she, so far, suffered most for the child, and as he did not seem to love it as he ought, he forfeited all right to control the child's destiny in a religious point of view.

The child *was* conveyed to the church, however, and the parish priest was really astonished when told that it belonged to Mr. Mulroony.

When he asked the sponsors what name the child was to get, Mrs. Williams answered, "Call it, sir, '*Patrick Michael Mulroony*.'"

"Mulroony?" said the priest, repeating the word, "I don't know any person of that name in the congregation. Perhaps, you mean P. M. Ronay?"

"Yes, your reverence, some called him by that name, but he is going to resume the old name and the old paths I hope."

When the baptism was over, and the name registered in full, the godmother handed the priest a fifty dollar note or bill, saying, "The father, not being able to be present, sent you that for a fee, your reverence, with his filial duty."

"I thank you. That is very liberal of him to do. I think, notwithstanding his change of name to the Yankee pattern, there is some Irish blood in him yet," said the priest; "may God bless him."

"Do you think there is any Irish blood in this youngster you made a Christian of just now? I don't think there is. His head is too red for a Mulroony."

“Tut! tut! don’t talk that way, my good woman. The child is good enough, God bless him. Take him home now to his parents.”

“Indeed I will, your reverence. I don’t at all grudge them their luck in this little *luchaun*” (feeble child).





CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE GENTEEL IRISH-AMERICAN BROUGHT TO HIS SENSES.
AT LAST.

HIS narrative, according to the rules of criticism, ought to have ended with the chapter that recorded the marriage of our hero. But as the writer prefers to satisfy his reader's expectations rather than to please critics, he concluded to add this and the two or three last chapters, in order to trace to the end the fall of the principal characters of the work.

It is certain that the visit of Mrs. Williams to her nephew, though she had the very best intentions, effected nothing toward drawing closer the bonds of love between him and his wife. On the contrary, her comments and strictures on the appearance, character and style of Mrs. Mulroony, served greatly to arouse her husband's suspicions and to widen the breach between the couple.

She often reproached her nephew with such language as the following: "What on earth made you marry such a woman at all? She had neither

wealth, beauty, nor family. Look at her build. She is all pads, mohair, cotton, pomatum and paint! See her shape. Her legs, when she hasn't on her artificial *calves*, are like a pair of knitting-needles stuck into two sods of turf. She is as stooped as a woman of sixty. Really, I'm ashamed of you, Pat." Such and like speeches from his aunt and others, daily added to the young man's disgust, till at length he began to despise, if not to hate, her whom he had so long ardently loved. Rude words and harsh expressions soon succeeded to ideas of disgust and contempt, and very sharp words passed between the pair.

One day, to the question why she commenced again to introduce preachers into the house, she replied that it was her house as well as his; and, that she would see and receive whom she pleased without leave or license from him or anybody else. She was no slave of his, though she was his wife."

"You will have to obey me, madam," he said determinedly, "or we can't be very long man and wife."

"I am ready to sever the connection," she answered, "as soon as you like, if you give me my dowry of one-third of this place and alimony for me and my child!"

"And then what will you do?" he said.

"Then I shall do as I please, as I always did; and perhaps get some one for a husband that

won't play the tyrant, as you try to do. But you can't come it, Ronay; I would not be my daddy's daughter if I knew fear."

"Please don't call me that dwarfed name any more. My name is Mulroony, not Ronay."

"No I shan't begin now to give in to call you what I called you since the first sad day I saw you. I will be no Irish Paddy's wife."

"Whose wife will you be then? Perhaps that *holy man*, Elder Redtop, would suit you better than I—a mere Irishman!"

At the mention of Redtop's name, because she felt stung at the reproach that a hint regarding his intimacy involved, her eyes kindled. She became pale in the face, looked around her for a weapon, and seeing none at hand, she snatched the coffee-pot from the stove and flung it at her *dear* husband, almost scalding him to death.

"Very good," he said, "I'll soon find out what you are made of. I won't raise a hand to you, though I am a Paddy. But mind, if I find your pious friend here once more, I will make him pay for this infamous conduct of yours, madam."

"You dare not touch a hair on his head. You know if you did, you would be sent to the State prison, where you ought to be for your cruel treatment both to me and my child. Oh, the idea of having my beloved babe sprinkled on by an old popish priest, and that against my will. I could endure anything but that. Yes dear," she con-

tinued, addressing the infant, "you are now a papist. I don't care how soon you die, for I can't love you well any more."

Then to these passionate words succeeded reproaches, tears, oaths, protestations, regrets and hysterics, till, in utter despair and disgust, the young man left the house, saddled his horse, and after giving some instructions to his men, rode off to St. Paul.

He did not return for two or three days, and the wife began to become uneasy, suspecting many things, but really feeling sad for the absence of society. Hence, she sent a messenger into the village to invite her religious friends and enlist their sympathy, and ask their council in her troubled condition. The whole crowd of religious fanatics came round again, accompanied by others who came to protest against the injustice done to her feelings by the baptism of her infant by the priest. Some proposed to go to the priest's house to mob him. Some were for taking a legal action. But the Elders discountenanced these violent measures, assuring the crowd that they could undo this popish baptism again by administering a ceremony of their own, and addressing the "Throne of Grace," as they called it.

There was great activity for a day or two at the homestead of Mulroony, and liberal feasting, and loud talking, and *pious* praying, and plenty of old wine drank, and all the good things liberally par-

taken of, while the man of the house was absent. Finally, on the third day Mulroony came back, and upon receiving a signal from David, his confidential man, he rushed into his house and there found the *dominie*, Redtop, praying in rather a husky tone of voice, holding one of madam's hands in his own, with his other hand on her shoulder.

The indignant husband seized him by the red hair of his head, dragged him roaring to the kitchen door, and flung him out on the wet and slippery pavement. His arm was broken, and he lost an eye by being dashed against a sharp stone on the paved door yard. The servant next came up, and taking him to the public road, and giving him his hat which fell from his head, he pointed out to him the "road on which he should go" in double quick time. Half blind and maimed as the wretch was, he made good his arrival home in Brighton, two miles distant, in little over twenty minutes.

This put a stop for a short time to the intrusion of itinerary preachers to the Mulroony mansion. But, as violence is always wrong, it happened that what this inexperienced young man regarded as the most effectual means to get rid of these intruders, was the very thing which secured them a home and a warm reception under the roof that once sheltered the Mulroony family.

* * * * *

It happened about six months after this unfortunate assault on the wretched Redtop, who

now, from being a fool, became a hero, that a good-hearted priest now no more—*requiescat in pace*—named Father Thomas, was going his rounds in the State prison, distributing prayer-books and other religious articles of interest, such as beads and medals to the Catholic prisoners.

On the day in question he had a larger variety of presents than usual, for it was during the Christmas holidays. He had a consoling word for all, serious or pleasant, as he perceived from their countenances whether they were sad or cheerful.

There was one whom he noticed very sad, but did not dare to speak to him, as the jailor told the priest he did not belong to "his folks."

The young man himself, however, addressed the priest, asking why he did not speak to him, or give him any of his sacred books or beads.

"I did not think you were a Catholic, as I perceive from your language you are," said the priest.

The priest then asked the janitor why he had been mistaken about this young man's religion.

He answered that he took him to be, from his name, a native, and heard he was a Methodist, and was sentenced for attempting to kill his own minister.

"No such thing," answered the prisoner; "I am a Catholic and an Irishman, and was never a Methodist or anything else in my life but a Catholic, though only a bad Catholic."

"Is not your name Ronay?" asked the jailor.

"No, sir, my name is Mulroony, and my christian name is Patrick."

"How, then, have the officers that delivered you here given in your name as Paran M. Ronay?"

"I was called that by my neighbors, and I allow I acquiesced in the change for a time. But I was baptized Patrick Mulroony, and with that name I expect to go to the grave."

"Oh, then, you are mine," said Father Thomas. "Please, Mr. Janitor, let me into this young man's cell; I wish to have a conversation with him."

"Yes, of course, and welcome," answered the jailor. "Here, Father Thomas, are the keys for you, and you can enter any cell you please. I am not afraid that you will aid any of the prisoners to escape."

In a few words, our once genteel Irish-American who had changed his name, neglected his religion, and despised his parents, all because he wanted to get a *high education*, informed Father Thomas how, after he assaulted the Elder, he was arrested and tried for attempt at murder, and sentenced to four years in the Penitentiary. He learned since also that, having been sued for damages in a civil action, the Elder Redtop recovered ten thousand dollars against his farm, which was sold at auction, but again bid in and purchased by his wife in her own name. "Thus, you see, Father," he added, with tears in his eyes, "how I am now deprived of my liberty and means of livelihood, because I gave no

heed to the advice of my mother and her clergy in regard to what they correctly called *Godless education*, but what Professor Hoskey at first, and afterwards my wife, praised as the greatest blessing man can enjoy as enabling one to get rid of what they call superstition, and giving him independence of thought and action. You can see, your reverence, what I *profited* and what I *lost* by my foolish course. Profit—1st, A County superintendency of education worth \$900 a year; 2nd, the name of being a smart man in the community; 3d, a few academy prizes; 4th, an extravagant and expensive wife, and lastly a home in the Penitentiary for *four years*. This is the sum of my profit. Now let us see the loss: 1st, I lost my peace of mind, and a good conscience; 2d, I lost both my parents—father by death, and then my saintly mother, who left me in disgust and took with her all my luck; 3d, I lost the affections of relatives and good-will of friends; 4th, I lost my faith, at least, for a time, and the Grace of God; and lastly, I lost my farm, my property, and, worse than all, my liberty. Oh Father, how unevenly they balance my *Profits* and *Losses*.”

“Yes, my son,” said Father Thomas, “and another loss you have suffered, which I suppose you are not aware of. Will I tell you of it? I fear you can’t stand it.”

“Oh yes, Father, I can stand anything now; I am so wretched and humbled. Nothing can affect me more than the loss of my parents. Please tell

me what other loss I have suffered without knowing it."

"You have lost your wife, who, after her legal divorce from you, immediately got married to Elder Redtop, her former suitor, and they are both living in your house, which now, by a fiction of law, belongs to them. Can you stand this news unmoved?"

"Yes, Father, I can. This loss is what I call a great gain. I would forfeit the whole State, if I owned it, in order to get rid of that infamous woman, who has been the active cause of all my mishaps, troubles and calamities. I am now light-hearted. I will be again, I am already, happy since I am parted from that woman forever. Father, let me kiss your hand for giving me this glad news. Now, though within these walls, I am free, since I am rid of that most false of womankind. Father, please hear my confession. I will now begin a new life, be a good man forevermore, since the Lord and His holy mother have permitted me to regard myself as free from the chains which that craftiest of women wound around my captive heart. Let her have the farm, ay, and all temporal prosperity, so that I can say that once more *I am free*—I am Patrick Mulroony."

Father Thomas exerted his influence in favor of the young man, and he had to serve but *one year* out of the four in durance. He moved down east after he got his liberty, leaving his farm to

the spoilers, though he could regain it by litigation, and is now a wealthy contractor in an eastern city.

The wife and her child both died of the small-pox soon after, and poor Redtop is in the Lunatic Asylum. Hoskey, the knave, lives yet, but lives despised by all his neighbors; shut out from decent society, and is a victim of an incurable disease, loathsome to himself and disgusting to society!

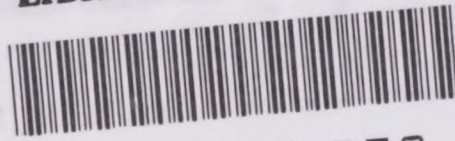
“*Sic transit gloria mundi.*”

THE END.





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